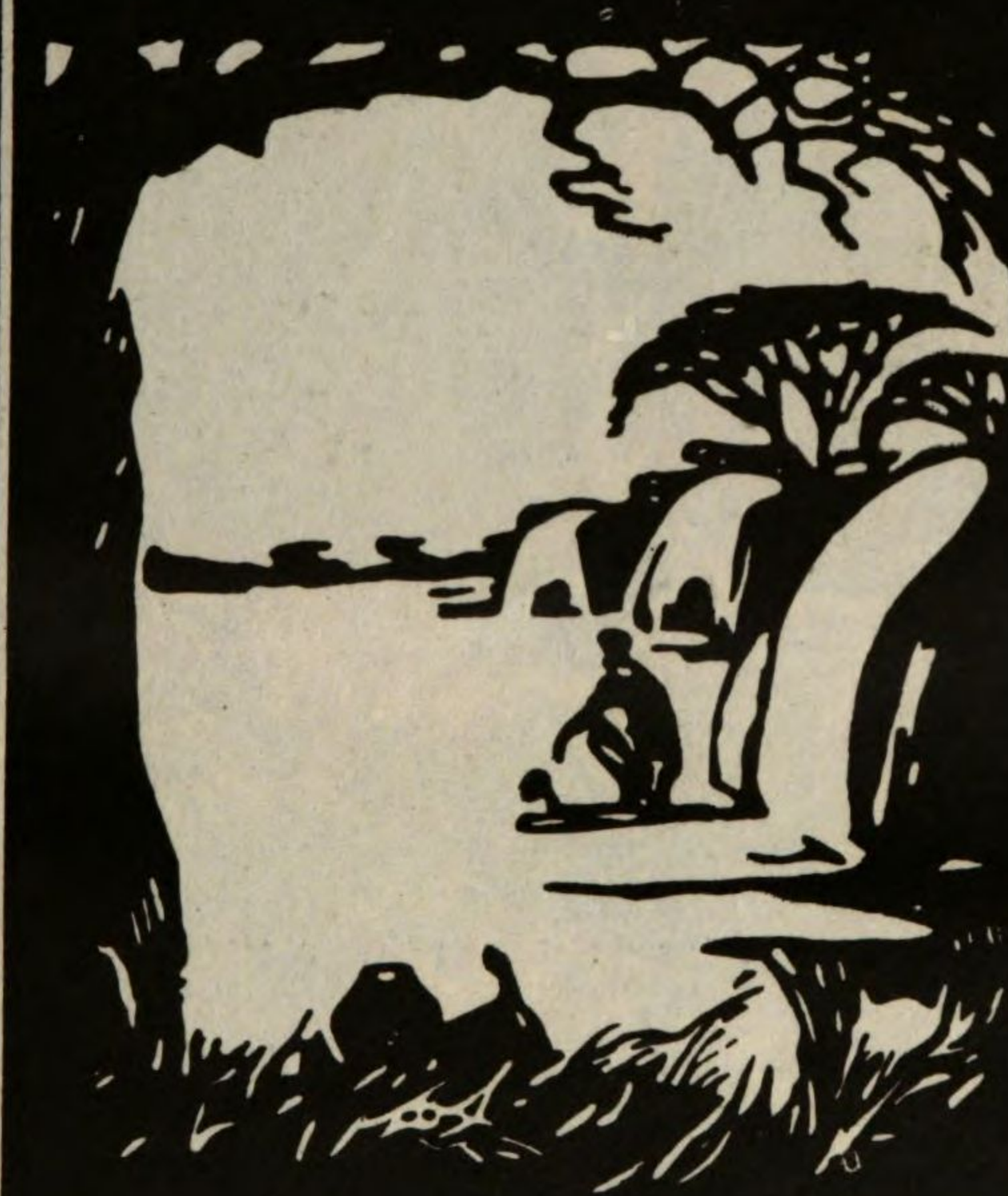
EX LIBRIS AFRICANIS



G CARLETON JONES

Jt. sing. 688 t/1

Ll. 15 –

<36638989820012

<36638989820012

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

On Zinc by L. Haghe.

Day & Haghe Zinc^y

BOAR HUNT.

London Pub^d by Richard Bentley 1835.

Wb

TEN YEARS

IN

SOUTH AFRICA:

INCLUDING

A PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION

OF THE

WILD SPORTS OF THAT COUNTRY.

BY LIEUT. J. W. D. MOODIE,

21ST FUSILIERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in Ordinary to His Majesty.

1835.

Hb/66/1367

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

PREFACE.

In submitting the following pages to the notice of the public, the principal object of the author has been to convey to the reader a true notion of the habits and mode of life of a colonist in the southern extremity of Africa.

From his long residence in this part of the globe, the writer had opportunities of seeing more of the Dutch settlers, and of the Hottentot and Kaffre tribes, than usually falls to the lot of the traveller. His frequent excursions into the woody jungles of this savage region also enabled him to observe the wild and magnificent scenery peculiar to the country, and to acquire much knowledge of the natural history of the colony, more especially as regards the elephant. Of the mode of hunting this animal, and the part which he took in this exciting sport, he has endeavoured to convey

an accurate idea. He thinks that the anecdotes and particulars he has introduced of other wild beasts, such as the wild boar, the tiger, the lion, the antelope, the rhinoceros, &c. will not be deemed destitute of interest.

In the Appendix, the author has given some very interesting anecdotes and particulars of the Hottentots and Kaffres, among whom it was his lot to pass ten years of his life, as well as some vivid pictures of the wild sports of the country, which cannot fail to be considered an acceptable addition to his own adventures. For these he is principally indebted to the travels of Lieutenant Rose—a gentleman who was four years in South Africa at the same period with himself, and to whom he has alluded in the course of his narrative.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

Determination to emigrate.—A Half-pay Officer.—Altered Prospects of a Family.—Colony at the Cape.—The Author sets out to join his Brother.—The Captain of a Fishing-smack.—Discomforts on board.—A Passage to the Cape.—Scarcity of Provisions for the Voyage.—Island of Fernando de Noronha.—Politeness of the Governor.—An Excursion.—Entertainment.—Arrival at the Cape. . . Page 1

CHAPTER II.

Situation of Cape Town.—The Streets and Houses.—Lodgings.—A Dutch Landlord.—Education and Morals.—Divorces.—Vices of the Slave Population.—Different Classes of Inhabitants.—Avarice of the Dutch.—Traits in their Character.—An atrocious Criminal.—State of the Colony.—Wine Farmers.—Flavour of Cape Wines.—Climate of South Africa.—Diseases.—Persons of the Colonists described.—Ascent of Table Mountain.—Magnificent View.—Indecent Conduct at a Funeral.—Arrival of the Author's Brother.—Character of the Labourers.—Vice of Intemperance.—Duties on Spirituous Liquors. . . . 25

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Cape Town for the Interior.—Aspect of the Country.—Scarcity of Fuel.—House of an English Settler.—Ascent of Hottentots-Hollands Kloef.—Optical Illusion.—Grand Scenery.—Agricultural Produce.—Dutch Waggons.—Hospitality of the Farmers.—Dutch Manners.—Laudable Custom.—Gigantic Mountain Range.—Improved appearance of the Country.—Hints to the Traveller.—An eminent Colonist.—The Zonder End River.—Moravian Missionary Station. 56

CHAPTER IV.

Situation of Genadendaal.—Account of the Moravian Missionaries.—Employment of the Women.—Community of Property.—Restraints on Hottentot Servants—Their Improvident Habits.—Benevolent intentions of the Missionaries.—Curious mode of obtaining Wives.—Variety of African Exotics.—Knowledge of the Botanist.—Wild Animals.—The Rheebock Antelope.—The Duiker, or Ducker.—Village of Swellendam.—Economy of the Dutch.—Respect for the English.—The Buffel Jaagt River.—Missionary Station of Zuure Brack.—Conduct of Mr. S——.—Privations of the Hottentots. 76

CHAPTER V.

Female Hottentots Bathing.—Neat Farm-houses.—Residence of the Author's Brother.—Description of his Estate.—Interior of the Dwelling.—A singular mode of building Houses.—Climate of the Colony.—Qualities of the Soil.—Aridity of South Africa.—Lofty Mountain Range.—Produce of the Land.—Effects of Summer Heats.—Agriculture of the Dutch Colonists.—Requisites for a successful Farmer.—Agricultural Implements.—Construction of the

Dutch Ploughs.—Mode of preparing the Grain for Market.—Indian Corn.—Pumpkins and Melons.—Culture of Tobacco recommended. 98

CHAPTER VI.

Interests of the Farmers.—Cultivation of Wheat.—Tea and Coffee Plants.—A Dutch Luxury.—Production of Silk.—General Scarcity of Water.—Extensive Grants of Land.—Rearing of Cattle recommended.—Grasses of the Country.—Pasture Lands.—Management of Milch Cows.—Profits of a Cattle Farm.—Strange Disease in Horses.—Mode of accounting for it.—Dutch Mode of breaking in a Colt.—Inferiority of the Cape Sheep.—Improved Wool.—Hints as to the Encouragement of Manufactures. . . 124

CHAPTER VII.

Novel Mode of Life.—Uniformity of the Dutch Character.—Mode of accounting for it.—Oppressive Government at the Cape.—Dutch Cunning and Roguery.—Friendly Offerings.—Female Influence.—Education of Children.—Early Vices.—African Scenery described.—A Monster of Obesity.—Melancholy Emblems.—A Ludicrous Scene.—Indifference to Death.—Religious Notions.—Passion of Love.—Marriage a matter of convenience.—Matrimonial Expedition.—National Pride of the Scotch.—Prejudices and Vices.—Hottentot Oppression.—A Love Affair.—Trial for Murder. 145

CHAPTER VIII.

Dutch Manners.—Indolence of the Women.—Comparison between the Savage and the Civilized Man.—Characteristics of the Dutch at the Cape.—Remarks on the Condition of Slaves.—Punishment of disobedient Servants.—On the Repression of Crime in South Africa.—Inefficiency of the

new Slave Laws.—Character of a Nation.—Progress of Government.—Roman Conquests.—Modern Prejudices.—Slaves and Serfs. — Negro Oppression. — Hints on the Emancipation of the Slaves.—Plan for ameliorating their Condition. 169

CHAPTER IX.

Characteristics of the Slave.—Reputed Arts of the Malays.—Anecdote.—Jealousy of the Malay Girls.—Slaves from Mozambique. — Gradual Amelioration of the Condition of Slaves.—Conduct of the Missionaries.—Degraded State of the Hottentots.—Curious Experiment.—Oppressions of the Dutch. — Character of the Hottentots. — Their Vices. — Amiable Traits. — Brutality of the Men. — Effects of Intemperance.—Polygamy.—A mixed Race.—Attractions of the Women.—Corpulence of the Hottentots. . 195

CHAPTER X.

Passion of the Hottentots for Music.—A Summer Evening.—Musical Instruments.—Extraordinary knowledge of Harmony.—Singular Anecdote.—Hottentot Airs.—Intoxicating Liquors.—The Karree Plant.—Medical knowledge of the Hottentots.—Plants of the Country.—Remedy for Snake-bites.—Feats of a Gift Drinker. — Poisonous Snakes.—Hottentot Superstitions.—Belief in Witchcraft.—A hideous Animal.—Stratagem of a cunning Woman.—Injustice towards Slaves. 224

CHAPTER XI.

Decrease in the Numbers of the Hottentots. — Use of Spirituous Liquors. — Causes for a reduced Population.—Wild Beasts of South Africa.—Description of the Hyena.—Mode of entrapping the Animal. — Cruel Amusement. — Habits of the Ant-Bear. — The Porcupine.—Wild Dogs.—

Numbers of Jackals. — Depredations of the "Mousehond." —Nocturnal Visits of the Porcupine — Mode of hunting the Animal. 243

CHAPTER XII.

Passion for Field-Sports in England. — Discontent of the Lower Classes. — Amusements of South Africa. — Resorts of the Wild Boar. — Mode of hunting the Animal. — Excellent Sport. — Excursions in quest of Wild Pigs. — Picture of a Dutch Wife. — An avaricious Colonist. — Proceedings of his Nephews. — Advantageous Traffic. — Successful Manœuvre. 262

CHAPTER XIII.

Different Species of Antelopes. — The "Bonte-bock," or Spotted Buck. — Hunting the Animal prohibited. — Habits of the Rhee-bock — Mode of approaching them. — Shooting the "Duiker," or Diver. — Chase of the Grys-bock described. — Beauty of the Eyes of the Gazelle. — The Klip-springer. — An aged Hottentot. — Herds of Springbocks. — On the Instinct of the Antelope. — Distribution of the Brute Creation over the Earth. — On different Varieties of Animals. — Suppositions respecting the Flood. — Changes in the Earth's Surface. — Quadrupeds of New Holland. — Object of the Holy Scriptures. 282

CHAPTER XIV.

Different Races of Men. — Diffusion of the Human Race over the Earth. — The Savage and the Civilized Man. — Progress of Civilization. — On the various Complexions of the different Races of Mankind. — Fair Tribe of Hottentots. —Peculiarities of Formation. — Causes of superior Stature. — Disgraceful Mode of Reasoning. . . . 297

CHAPTER XV.

Baboons and Monkeys.—Mode of hunting the Baboon.—Habits of the Ant-Bear — Method of capturing the Animal.—Singular Instinct of the Honey-Bird.—Anecdote of the Fiscal.—Variety of Snakes.—The Puff-Adder.—The Ring-Hals, or Ring-Neck.—Remarks on Snake-Bites.—Adventure of the Author.—The Secretary Bird.—Remedy for the Bite of a Serpent.—Meaning of the term "Fascination."—The Snake and the Birds.—The Chameleon.—Scorpions.—The Tarantula.—Pheasants and Partridges.—The Paaw, or Wild Peacock. 310

CHAPTER XVI.

Farming Establishment at Groot Vaders Bosch.—Hottentot and European Servants—Their Wages—Their usual Occupations.—Laziness of the Hottentots.—Low Price of Wheat.—Residence of the Author's Brother.—Subscription of the Farmers.—Difficulty of disposing of Grain.—Failure of the Wheat-crops.—English and Dutch Farming.—An Eccentric Character.—Craving of the Hottentots for Brandy.—Singular Anecdote.—Customs of the Hottentots.—Comforts of Savage Races.—Journey to George Town.—Travelling in Waggons delightful.—A Romantic Country.—Irrigation of the Land.—Hottentot Powers of Imitation.—Singular Youth. 327

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

HUNTING THE WILD BOAR.—Frontispiece . . Vol. I.
AN ELEPHANT HUNT.—Frontispiece . . . Vol. II.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

TEN YEARS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

Determination to Emigrate.—A Half-pay Officer.—Altered Prospects of a Family.—Colony at the Cape.—The Author sets out to join his Brother.—The Captain of a Fishing-smack.—Discomforts on board.—A Passage to the Cape.—Scarcity of Provisions for the Voyage.—Island of Fernando de Noronha.—Politeness of the Governor.—An Excursion.—Entertainment.—Arrival at the Cape.

It often happens that people suffering under some recent infliction of that capricious dame, Fortune, hastily determine on emigrating to some one of our colonies, in the confident expectation that there, as a matter of course, all their difficulties will cease, and that they will forthwith enter on the enjoyment of all the independence and luxuries which in England are usually the fruit of long and persevering indus-

try, or superior sagacity and success in business. It is also natural, under the pressure of misfortune, to alleviate present sorrow by the contemplation of some vague and undefined scheme of future happiness. If this inclination of the mind be indulged in as to time, we may expect that it will have still more influence as to place, and that some distant land, as unlike as possible to their native country, will be selected as the scene of their anticipated enjoyment.

The mind so disposed naturally seeks for gratification in the perusal of the narratives of travellers, which, unfortunately, in nine cases out of ten, are lamentably deficient in that kind of information which is of most vital importance to a settler: such works are generally fertile in subjects rather calculated to please the imagination than to inform the judgment. An ordinary traveller can at best but relate his first impressions of a country he passes rapidly through, or retail the opinions of others, the accuracy of whose statements he has rarely time or patience to investigate. When we consider that the settler is often influenced in his opinions by his interest, and that the traveller

generally has many native prejudices to get rid of, we need not be surprised at the discordant accounts we receive of the same country. I believe I may safely say, that all who have the means of living comfortably, and of providing for their families, will best consult their own happiness by remaining in the land of their fathers; but, when misfortunes have overtaken them—when they find that they cannot maintain their former station in society, and are capable of vigorous exertion, they can hardly fail to better their condition by emigrating to one of our colonies, while they are at least sure of procuring by their labour a subsistence for their families.

Of all situations above absolute want, I believe none can be more irksome and cheerless than that of a half-pay officer; conscious of being regarded as an useless and burdensome member of society by a large proportion of his countrymen, and ignorant of all the usual occupations of life, he too often sinks into a state of gloomy despondency, or seeks relief in dissipation from the miserable feeling of living without an object or hope of advancement in the world.

With these painful sensations, on the reduction of the second battalion of my regiment, I took my passage for the Orkney islands, where my family possessed considerable landed property, which their predecessors had enjoyed for several centuries—from the time the country was held by their Norwegian ancestors. Instead of the cheerful home I had anticipated, where, with my brothers, I had spent the happiest days of my childhood, amidst the wild scenery of these remote islands, I found a sad change had taken place in the circumstances of our family; debts had accumulated on debts, with interest, law expenses, and all the miseries that hover round the declining fortunes of a proud and ancient race.

My ancestors had been firmly attached to the House of Hanover when all the other proprietors in the county in which they resided had been secretly engaged on the side of the Pretender. My great-grandfather, a distinguished officer in the navy, had been murdered, when he was eighty years of age, in the streets of Kirkwall, by Sir James Stuart of Burray, a violent partisan of Charles Edward. My grandfather

was a child at the time, but never lost sight of his father's murderer; and though the latter obtained a pardon, when the last rebellion broke out, in the year 1745, he again joined the Pretender's party, at the time my grandfather, who was then a captain in the army, obtained a command against the rebels in Orkney, succeeded in taking Sir James Stuart and his brother prisoners, and sent them to the Tower. He forced all the other rebels to conceal themselves in a cave in the Island of Westray, where they were fed by a poor man who kept their secret. These were crimes in our family not soon to be forgotten in a country where enmities are carefully handed down from father to son; and it is not to be wondered at that the other proprietors regarded the falling fortunes of our house with secret satisfaction. We gradually began to experience that change in their manners towards us which every one who has been in a similar situation cannot fail to note in the neighbours whom he had formerly been accustomed to regard as his friends, and which change usually shows itself in a very unequivocal manner in British society.

My elder brother, who, being the heir, had been brought up to no profession, finding that the property would be sold to pay the debts, as a last resource, determined on emigrating to the Cape of Good Hope while he had yet the means of doing so. This colony appeared to him to be one in which he could obtain an independent livelihood with a less violent alteration in his habits than might be expected in most persons. The rest of the family were not long in making up their minds to follow his example, as soon as the property should pass into other hands.

Another brother, who had recently been promoted to a lieutenancy in the navy, in the room of an elder brother who fell in the attack on Leghorn in 1813, soon afterwards joined us in Orkney, after his ship was paid off. As he determined on remaining with our aged and blind father until the property was sold, I prepared, having nothing to detain me in Europe, to join my eldest brother, who was now settled at the Cape.

To those who have never experienced the

bitterness of parting, perhaps for the last time, from a kind and helpless parent, whose independent and proud spirit was nearly sinking under accumulated misfortunes, it would be difficult to describe my feelings on this painful occasion. After receiving his last blessing, though I at that time hoped to see him again at the Cape, and taking leave of my other relations, I was soon seated at the helm of my boat. Taking a last look at the old family mansion and the red rocks that towered over the western ocean, we bounded lightly over the tide of the Pentland firth, which bore us rapidly to the eastward, where I expected to fall in with some vessel on her way to the capital. We soon overtook a fishing-smack: upon making my bargain with the captain, I shook hands with my kind-hearted countrymen, and in a few hours lost sight of the wild rocks and brown hills of Orkney, which possessed more interest in my eyes than the richest prospect the imagination can picture.

The sad and the ridiculous sometimes succeed each other in quick succession as we journey

on in the voyage of life, and the mind is often relieved for the time from feelings which it would be misery to perpetuate.

Our captain was a stout-built little man with a most rubicund nose, which showed what use he made of his time ashore, whenever his toilsome occupation allowed him a short interval to lay in a cargo of artificial spirits. He was equipped in the usual multiplicity of habiliments worn by smacksmen, with a pair of huge fisherman's boots, secured to his legs by several turns of cod-line, and a tarpaulin hat with its brim falling over his broad shoulders, technically called a "norwester." After seeing my countrymen under weigh, he asked me to "step down below and take a glass of brandy by way of a degistener" before dinner.

While my companion was re-loading his short blackened pipe with tobacco, I observed that his rough weatherbeaten countenance indicated, by its deeply-marked furrows, many a reverse of fortune; his history, with which he soon favoured me, sufficiently confirmed the impression conveyed by his appearance.

"Yes, sir, it's a hard life is this here fishing

trade, but if I had knowed as much as I knows now, I 'd have had two or three smacks of my own by this time, and a genteel living for my missis and her children at Gravesen'. In them 'ere war-times, the trade was brisk and money came in by handfulls, and ve thought as how ve 'd never see the end on't; for, you see, when ve gets ashore it's not long o' burning a hole in our pockets at the drinkin' shops, and what vith other things, ve never knows how it goes. Now here have I been knocking about in this here trade for the last five-and-twenty years, atween the river, the coast of Norway, the Dogger, and the Orkneys, from the time I was no bigger than that 'ere boy, and at last I gets a wessel of my own—there wasn't a smarter craft in Gravesen' or Greenwich; then comes the peace-time, and the fish begins to fetch low prices in the Lunnun market, and what atween tear and wear o' sails and runnin' rigging, and sometimes carryin' away a spar or two, or makin' a bad fishing, my smack comes to the hammer, when the chaps finds I can't pay 'em their wages, and with what's over I buys me a share of this here wessel, and starts again as

master, and now I owes no man nothing—no not the walue of that 'ere 'bacco-pouch. Howsomever, it comes a little hard on my missis and the young ones, that's never know'd what it is to want for nothing; and, though I says it, my missis hasn't her better in Gravesen', for though I've seen her in all weathers, I never heard a crooked word come out of her mouth, nor see'd her the worse of liquor since we was man and wife."

The captain was here interrupted by the entrance of the boy with a huge tureen of vegetable soup, which he deposited on the cabin floor, while he covered the table with a piece of coarse sail-cloth. Then, chucking his "nor-wester" into the berth behind him, he seated himself at the head of the board; and, loosening the clasp-knife from the cord that secured it to his button-hole, and wiping the blade on his sleeve, laid it quietly on the table beside him. Several spoons, but no plates, now made their appearance, when the captain invited me to take some soup. I felt much in the same predicament with the poor man in the eastern tale, when he was asked by the Caliph to help him-

self to some choice morsel from the empty dishes. My companion looked half serious and half astonished, but immediately recollecting himself, said, "Perhaps you would like a plate, sir," putting an emphasis on the word "plate." "Here, boy, bring the gentleman a plate." He however, being less fastidious, after baling me out a sufficient quantity with his spoon, proceeded to take some himself without the intervention of any such modern luxury.

The soup was soon removed to the floor of the cabin, where the crew had already seated themselves; and its place supplied by salt beef and a large wooden dish of cabbage, from which the captain helped himself upon a ship-biscuit, which he held in his left hand to answer the purpose of a plate. I had good reason to make the best use of the present opportunity, for this was the last regular meal I was able to enjoy during the voyage.

A fishing-smack is one of the most wretched and comfortless modes of conveyance of which a traveller is sometimes compelled to avail himself. A hundred odious circumstances conspire to offend those organs whose sensibility it is

in the nature of sea-sickness to render morbidly acute. Coal and tobacco smoke, and bilge-water, at other times scarcely tolerable, now render his life at sea worse than a blank. Sea-sickness, however, in a moral, as well as physical respect, is productive of beneficial results, in showing us that our mere existence, when free from mental or bodily suffering, is a state of positive enjoyment; for who, when quietly seated in a comfortable room with the green fields before him, after a stormy voyage, has not felt a sentiment of gratitude steal over his heart for a boon, which, at other seasons, he has been but too apt to underrate?

After being at sea about four days, we arrived at Gravesend, where I gladly quitted the smack, and proceeded to London to take my passage for the Cape. As I wished to lose as little time as possible, I went immediately to the Exchange, where I observed the names of several vessels all warranted to sail on a certain day. The number of ships engaged in the Cape trade was at that time much more limited than at present, and the sums demanded for a passage were consequently very exorbitant.

I was not long in taking my passage on board a small vessel, for which I was to pay 50*l.* being 20*l.* less than the usual rate on board of the larger traders, on the captain's assurance that she would positively sail on the day stated in the handbills. Ascertaining, however, that she could not have her cargo completed for several weeks, and my agreement being only conditional, I looked out for another vessel, and found a small brig of one hundred and twenty tons, which had already cleared out. There was only one cabin passenger going by her; and the captain having laid in provisions for two, was glad to take 40*l.* for my passage. I mention these trivial circumstances for the information of emigrants, who are not always aware that no reliance is to be put in the statements of cards and handbills as to the time vessels may be ready to sail; and to point out the cheapest mode of performing the voyage.

The vessel on board which I had now taken my passage had formerly been a French privateer, and was of course a fast sailer, which, to my mind, made ample amends for anything that was wanting in point of accommodation.

My fellow passenger, a Cape merchant, I found a most agreeable and intelligent companion. On a long voyage, the fewer passengers there are the better, as a number of people of different dispositions cooped up together for such a time, in the absence of other occupation, frequently amuse themselves with petty quarrels, arising nobody knows how, and often terminating rather unpleasantly on arriving in port, particularly when there happen to be ladies on board.

Our captain, a shrewd little man with a tolerable share of self-conceit, possessed a great deal of that kind of knowledge which is drawn from observation, and no small store of that which is derived from stray volumes which had fallen in his way. He had also some gentlemanly feeling, so that on the whole he was a very favourable specimen of his class; his besetting sin was avarice, as we had soon occasion to observe from the very scanty supply of provisions he had laid in for the voyage. His bill of fare, besides the common ship stores of salt beef and biscuit, contained some two or three dozen of lean chickens (many of which after-

wards died a natural death), salt tongues, and pickled tripe. As usual on these occasions, he had taken a small supply of fresh beef to keep us quiet until we fairly lost sight of land, so that when we made the melancholy discovery of the state of our larder we found it was useless to complain.

We sailed from Gravesend on the 18th of June 1819, and in two days lost sight of the English shore. The usual incidents in a passage to the Cape have been so often described, that I shall not dwell on any particulars which are common to all voyages. Suffice it to say, that we fell in with the north-east trade-winds in the usual latitude; were becalmed and deluged with rain for a day or two under the line, which enabled us to fill our casks with fresh water; were followed for days by sharks, one of which we caught; and saw flying-fish in great numbers, which the sailors say fall down as soon as their wings are dry. On the 28th July we entered the south-east trades, and made Cape St. Roque, in Brazil, when we put about on the other tack.

Long before this period, our attenuated poul-

try had totally disappeared from the hen-coops; this was, no doubt, a most happy deliverance to them at least, as they fared still worse than any living creatures on board. I shall not easily forget the dismayed countenance of my fellow passenger when, one day at dinner, the captain somewhat timidly acquainted us that the fowl about to be discussed was the last of his stock. Mr. W—, born and bred in London, half epicure and half invalid, with the richest recollections of city feasts, and accustomed to look forward to his dinner-hour as the only happy time of the day amidst the toils of business, though he had hitherto borne the scanty fare with some philosophy, could not help casting a rueful glance at me during this announcement, which was so fatal to his peace of mind. The captain himself was not a little attached to good living, and, I verily believe, cursed his own stinginess at the moment, though, for appearance sake, he broke the matter to us as if it were one of those inevitable misfortunes to which voyagers are subjected. We were now reduced, during the rest of the voyage, to tripe and tongues, which regularly on alternate days took their places on

the table; the captain soothing our feelings on the tripe-day by telling us, "We shall have salt tongue *to-morrow*, gentlemen."

On the morning of the 29th, upon coming on deck, we discovered the island of Fernando de Noronha, which we were rapidly approaching. This was a most agreeable sight for the passengers, as we determined to insist on laying in a fresh stock of poultry and vegetables, but carefully avoided broaching the subject until we should be close in with the shore, lest the captain should put about on the other tack to save the additional expense.

Nothing could be more singular and fantastic than the first appearance of this beautiful little island. At first, it looked like the tall spire of some vast Gothic cathedral rising out of the ocean; as we came nearer, we found that this illusion was occasioned by a high hill covered with wood, and terminating in a sharp peak of rock, shooting up perpendicularly several hundred feet in height, but verdant with beautiful creeping plants nearly to the summit. In steering along the rocks, at one extremity of the island, we observed a most singular natural arch

of great height, through which appeared the sea and sky on the other side of the island, which we now perceived was of volcanic origin. We soon came to an open sandy bay, fronting the village, where we persuaded the captain to cast anchor. Opposite, on a rising ground, stood a white plastered building, with a large cross at the end next the sea, by which we knew it to be the church, and several smaller houses around it.

As we left the vessel in the boat, we observed some soldiers, dressed in white slop clothing, putting off from the beach on a kind of raft, made by joining two logs of wood together, with a blanket for a sail. They steered outside of us, but as we were landing altered their course and went on board the brig, observing her cautiously for some time before they ventured to approach. Mr. W——, who understood Portuguese, requested one of the soldiers to conduct us to the governor, who received us with great kindness.

This gentleman, Major Ruxillon, who was a German in the Portuguese service, informed us that the island was a place of banishment from

the American colonies, and that he commanded a garrison of one hundred and eighty men, who had the charge of about one hundred and fifty convicts, who were kept in a fort near the village. It appeared that the island was frequently visited by pirates, which circumstance rendered great vigilance necessary, and that he had sent off the raft to ascertain what we were, that he might know how to receive us. He was quite delighted to find that we were British, and with the opportunity afforded him of hearing the latest European news. On our inquiring if there were any women in the island, he informed us that they had only five or six.

The walls and roof of the room in which we sat were literally swarming with black lizards, which ran about in all directions with inconceivable rapidity in pursuit of the flies that were still more numerous; and every now and then one of them would fall on our heads from the roof. The outside walls of the habitation were also black with these nimble reptiles, which are encouraged in the houses to lessen the greater nuisance of the flies, and from a common opi-

nion in warm countries that they keep away the snakes.

The major, perceiving that we suffered from the excessive heat, ordered some cold rum-punch, very weak, to be made for us in the West Indian fashion, with a good deal of lime-juice. This refreshing beverage was prepared by a servant in the adjoining room, who leaped on a table, to pour it from a great height into a vessel on the floor, which makes it cool and mellow. Having proposed a walk before dinner, the governor and two or three of the officers kindly offered to accompany us.

The island was almost entirely covered with natural wood of small growth, among which we were much struck with a beautiful kind of tree, common to tropical climates, which projects horizontal branches to a great distance from the stem, from the extremities of which, filaments descend perpendicularly into the ground; these in time unite into a solid substance, and become, in fact, new trunks, which in their turn send out branches in a similar manner to the parent stem. Some of these trees covered more than an acre of

ground. Another tree of the same description extended its branches in the form of an arch, which, on reaching the ground, again takes root and throws out other arches to a great distance—thus affording a delightful shelter from the heat of a tropical sun.

All the cattle and horses belonging to the garrison, though fat and thriving, were covered with large sores, occasioned by the milky juice of trees peculiar to the island, which were so abundant as to constitute nearly a fourth part of the woods. The least drop of this juice falling on the skin produces an inveterate sore, or, if it falls in the eyes, total blindness: this, of course, renders great caution necessary in felling the trees.

Nothing could be more enchanting than the views we enjoyed during our walk, which was along a road cut through the woods, and following the course of the little ravines dividing the hills. In every part of this winding road, the most conspicuous object was the giant pinnacle of rock already alluded to, with its green vest of ivy. Our excursion terminated in a little dell in the bottom of a ravine, where a

garden had been planted with oranges, bananas, and other fruits. Here we found a black slave at work, watering the different vegetables in the garden: he was broad-shouldered and corpulent, but his countenance indicated that sense of moral debasement which I have since often had occasion to remark in this unhappy race.

Opposite the village, on the summit of a rock which overhung the sea, stood a well-built fort, in which the convicts were kept. We hinted that we should like to see it; but the governor dexterously avoided giving any direct answer to our request, from which I conclude that the guns and other defences were not in the best state.

Our entertainment at dinner principally consisted of fish dressed in various ways, a dish of pigeons at the head of the table being the only article of a more solid description. A small kind of pigeon, of quite black plumage, is the only bird fit for food which the island affords, but it is very abundant at all seasons. We had also a profusion of preserved and other fruits, and various kinds of sweatmeats, with

excellent European wines. In the evening, we visited two or three of the officers' ladies, who were lively, and by no means reserved in their manners: they possessed good figures, but their complexions were sallow and disagreeable. When we were ready to depart, we were accompanied to our boat by our hospitable entertainers, who loaded us with presents of Brazilian preserves and fruits of the island.

On the beach we found a number of slaves, with heaps of pumpkins and other vegetables for sale. Our captain, after much higgling with the venders, was persuaded to lay in a small stock of these necessary articles; for, with the exception of a few fowls, little else was to be had in the island. We parted with our kind host and his officers with regret.

Touching unexpectedly at a remote island, where the inhabitants are kind and friendly, is one of those agreeable incidents which relieve the tedium of a long voyage, and is remembered ever afterwards with peculiar pleasure. Mankind are naturally disposed to love their own species, to whatever clime they may belong, or in whatever portion of the globe we

may fall in with them. It is only when this inherent benevolence is deadened by suspicion, or counteracted by clashing interests, that it ceases to operate, even in the minds of the most churlish of our race. During a short visit, such as ours, people have only time to feel all the kindly emotions, and indulge in that interchange of good offices which draws men together, and lays the first foundations of society, before pride and selfishness have rendered laws necessary to preserve its harmony.

We lost the south-east trades in latitude thirty degrees south, and the wind came round to the westward blowing half a gale, the climate suddenly changing from great heat to as great cold, with sleet and snow. As we approached the Cape, we fell in with the Cape pigeons, as they are called, and the huge albatross soaring overhead. On Sunday, the 12th September, Table Mountain appeared in sight, and in a few hours the little brig was safe at anchor in the bay opposite to the town.

CHAPTER II.

Situation of Cape Town.—The Streets and Houses.—Lodgings.—A Dutch Landlord.—Education and Morals.—Divorces.—Vices of the Slave Population.—Different Classes of Inhabitants.—Avarice of the Dutch.—Traits in their Character.—An atrocious Criminal.—State of the Colony.—Wine Farmers.—Flavour of Cape Wines.—Climate of South Africa.—Diseases.—Persons of the Colonists described.—Ascent of Table Mountain.—Magnificent View.—Indecent Conduct at a Funeral.—Arrival of the Author's Brother.—Character of the Labourers.—Vice of Intemperance.—Duties on Spirituous Liquors.

The situation of Cape Town is exceedingly grand and imposing, standing on a slope which fronts the sea, with the Table Mountain rising abruptly in the back-ground to the height of three thousand five hundred feet. The base of the mountain is skirted with plantations of the silver-tree, which has been found native only in the immediate neighbourhood of the Cape peninsula, but has been lately propagated to a con-

siderable extent, in consequence of the increasing scarcity of fuel. Below these plantations, the environs of the town are laid out in vineyards, and dotted with neat white cottages, beautifully shaded with vines.

The streets of the town are built with exact regularity, at right angles. The houses are all two stories high and flat-roofed, which, at a little distance, gives them a very handsome appearance: on a nearer view, however, the eye is shocked by the vulgar ornaments in plaster intended to grace their fronts, and which have been carved out somewhat after the fashion of Dutch gingerbread. Many of the habitations of English residents have been recently ornamented in a much better style.

Though the general beauty of the scenery in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, in respect to the grander features of nature, exceeded anything of the kind I had hitherto seen, I confess I was rather disappointed as to the richness and apparent fertility of the uncultivated parts of the country: the general impression its aspect conveyed was that of aridity, though, from its being the winter season, I saw it under the

most favourable circumstances. Wherever the land was not irrigated by springs of water led out artificially, the low grounds were covered with dwarf shrubs, heaths, or very scanty herbage. The soil, however, appeared in many places to be excellent, wanting only water to render it productive; this was evident from the great quantity of vegetable matter of a more hardy description which everywhere covered the ground. I was particularly struck with the geraniums, which grew in great profusion in the hollows, and could not but admire the beautiful heaths, that often rise to the height of eight or nine feet.

At the time of my arrival no lodgings were to be procured at Cape Town, and I was therefore obliged, like others, to board with a private family. The house to which I was recommended was kept by an Englishman, or rather by his wife, to whom I paid four rix dollars, or about six shillings, a day; which was lower than the usual rate, and sufficiently exorbitant, when we take the cheapness of provisions into account. Cape Town is expensive to temporary residents, chiefly from being the resort of

East Indians, who come to the colony to recruit their health, and from being the seat of government as well as the chief sea-port of South Africa.

Our landlord was a heavy, stupid-looking man, whose time was measured by his meals, and who seemed to live but for the enjoyment of eating and drinking. He had originally been a schoolmaster in a small way, but, not meeting with the encouragement "his deserts merited," had become the purchaser of a large house in one of the principal streets, and, like many other inhabitants of Cape Town, made an easy subsistence by receiving boarders. His wife, who was a pretty little woman, amply made up, in activity and liveliness, for the torpidity of her husband, and came under that description of married ladies who are not quite satisfied with things as they find them. Among our boarders I observed that there was one who appeared to be privileged to say and do what he liked, and to have, as it were, the freedom of the house, though several little manœuvres were played off to conceal his influence in the family.

The inhabitants of Cape Town, and more

particularly the Dutch, are by no means conspicuous for the strictness of their morals; nor need we wonder at this, when we consider that slavery prevails among them, and that education at the period to which I refer was very much neglected.

From the culpable carelessness of parents in the instruction of their children at the Cape, and the influence of other local causes, external decency of manners exists there in a very small degree, as the most casual observer must perceive from the conversation of both sexes. In judging of the state of morals in a country, a very material distinction should be drawn between the vices which spring from the more turbulent passions, and such as arise from the love of gain, inasmuch as those of the latter description imply time for reflection.

One peculiarity in the manners of the Dutch at Cape Town, and which marks more strongly the low state of morals, is, that it is generally *after* marriage that both sexes are most noted for their laxity of conduct. At the period to which I allude—in 1819—a stranger, in perusing the Cape newspapers, could not help remark-

ing the number of separations between man and wife which were announced in them. For instance:—A. B., after living for several years with his wife C. D., discovers that their tempers are by no means suited to each other, so that they are in dread of proceeding to extremities, and therefore petition the Matrimonial Court to grant them a separation. Or, in other words: A. B. having a strong suspicion that his wife C. D., has been guilty of certain improprieties, petitions the court to be legally separated; which petition the court, moved by such excellent reasons, complies with, as a matter of course.

The possession of slaves is, however, the principal source of demoralization in this colony. Until very recently, a slave man could be sold away from his wife, or the wife from the husband. The natural consequence of this act of cruelty has been a general laxity of conduct in the slave population, who constitute a very large proportion of the lower order in the capital of the colony; and it need not therefore be a matter of surprise, that the children of the colonists, brought up with vice

constantly before their eyes, should not escape contamination.

One of the first observations a stranger makes at Cape Town is the affectation of equality among the white population, arising partly from the republican institutions of the original Dutch settlers, and partly from the democratic feelings of the English merchants; this is almost the only particular in which the old and new inhabitants appear to assimilate. The state and consequence, however, assumed by the civil and military authorities here are, as I believe in most of our colonies, very great; and are often, especially when the functionary happens to be a Dutchman, excessively disgusting. Consequence, in the eyes of our fellow-citizens, like an article of commerce, is always prized more according to its rarity, both with respect to the individual and to the country, than from its intrinsic value.

The inhabitants of Cape Town may be divided into six classes:—I. The civil and military functionaries, including military officers of all ranks, and the clergy of the established churches.—II. Lawyers, medical practitioners,

merchants, retailers, and those who live by letting out their slaves, and by receiving boarders, who form a large portion of the householders; and, in short, all the other white inhabitants above the rank of servants.—III. European and Cape-Dutch artificers and labourers, who compose a very doubtful class between the other white inhabitants and the freed blacks and Malays; claiming equality with the former, to whose rank they soon arrive if they are industrious; and, assuming an insolent superiority over the latter, principally founded on the difference of colour, but to which their general moral character and acquirements by no means entitle them.—IV. The free Malays, who, in point of intellect, are far above the free blacks and slaves. They are a semi-barbarous people, but are industrious and sober, and many of them are able to read and write in their own language. Their religion is the Mahometan.—V. The Hottentots, a class including all gradations of colour, arising from intermixture with Europeans and Cape-Dutch. And—VI. The slaves, — that numerous and unhappy class, whose mental and moral degradation is a re-

proach to their Christian masters. A more disjointed state of society, can hardly exist anywhere.

Though many local causes have combined to modify the character of the Dutch at the Cape, yet they still retain a strong family-likeness, both in their good and bad features, to their European progenitors. They have the same avaricious propensities and attention to small gains; the same persevering industry when they are sure of profit, but less energy in the pursuit of it; the same orderly, phlegmatic, and patient character.

The virtues as well as the vices of the Dutch at the Cape are of a less obtrusive and ostentatious nature than those of the English: these colonists are also strict observers of certain external forms in their manners, are strongly attached to their own customs, and unwilling to adopt the language and habits of the English further than their interest requires. To their connexions they are often liberal, in helping them forward in the world when they are industrious, and generous in relieving their relatives when distressed through inevitable mis-

fortunes: it is seldom, however, that their philanthropy takes a wider range. They are, moreover, universally kind and hospitable to travellers, whether they be friends or strangers. On the other hand, the despotic government of the colony has rendered them mean, deceitful, and cowardly; and the possession of slaves has made them cruel and tyrannical to their dependants, and otherwise corrupted their hearts and manners. It is, indeed, truly lamentable to think to what fiendish excesses the execrable system of slavery has given rise! I have often seen a man walking about the streets of Cape Town who, several years ago, deliberately roasted a slave to death in an oven for presuming to smile at his master; yet, this atrocious criminal was only subjected to some trifling punishment for the deed, and was afterwards received into society as if nothing of the kind had occurred. No crime, in fact, however heinous or disgraceful, excludes a man from society in this country, provided he conforms to its usual observances.

It is always difficult to give a just description of the character of a people, without being

liable to the imputation of dwelling too much on its darker hues. The vicious features of an individual are naturally most prominent, and are therefore first observed, while his virtues are known only to a few: it is therefore but fair that a person should be allowed the credit of more good qualities than at first sight he may appear to possess. My intention is to give my own impressions without disguise on every topic on which I write, leaving the reader to form such conclusions from the facts I mention as may suit his own particular mode of thinking. As I shall have occasion to recur to this subject in the course of my narrative, I shall not at present enlarge on the character of the different classes of society in Cape Town.

Judging from the external appearance of comfort enjoyed by the inhabitants of this place and its vicinity, a stranger is often led to conceive the most erroneous ideas of the real prosperity of the colony. To form correct opinions on this subject, it is necessary to ascertain whether the agricultural population be accumulating capital, or increasing the cultivation of the country; for conclusions drawn from the mode

of life of the inhabitants are always inaccurate; and, to judge of its general prosperity by that of the mercantile part of the population, would be a still more fallacious criterion. With a limited competition, merchants often rapidly accumulate capital in a country where the agriculturists are comparatively poor, by allowing them to run in their debt, and thus getting the farmer's produce at their own price, while they exact an exorbitant profit on the goods he is compelled to take from their stores. From what I could learn during my stay, this state of things very much prevailed at Cape Town, which, from its being at that period the only part whence the colonists received their supplies, had acquired a much greater degree of prosperity than the surrounding country. Notwithstanding the species of monopoly then enjoyed by the merchants of Cape Town, very few of them are possessed of what in England would be considered a large capital. Many of the Dutch inhabitants are in affluent circumstances; but, with a few exceptions, their wealth has sprung from the increase of their slaves, and

the sudden rise in their value consequent on the abolition of the inhuman traffic in slaves.

The wine-farmers in the neighbourhood of Cape Town are far from being a thriving class. The culture of the vine is generally confined to those who possess a number of slaves, for whom they could not otherwise find constant employment, and thus they manage to make a comfortable livelihood; but they by no means obtain a fair return for the capital employed. The style in which the cheapness of provisions and the command of labour enable this class to live, would lead a stranger to form very erroneous ideas of their wealth and prospects. The circumstances of the corn and stock-farmers are much better, inasmuch as they require a much smaller capital, and, when not too far from market, receive a better return for their labour.

The Cape district, with few exceptions, is very inferior to the other parts to the eastward of it, both as a grazing and a corn country. Its soil is generally poor and sandy, and where good, it is so arid, that nothing in the way of cultivation can be done with it without the aid

of irrigation, when the farmer is so fortunate as to have a good spring to lead over his land during the long droughts which peculiarly characterise the climate. The wine-trade has been for some time on the decline, in consequence of the reduction of the duties on European wines, as well as from the comparatively inferior quality of those of the Cape.

Many reasons have been assigned for the disagreeable flavour of the common Cape wines, and great exertions have of late years been made to improve them, which, I doubt not, under other circumstances, might ultimately prove successful. It has been said that the earthy flavour, as it is called, arises from the nature of the soil, and that therefore it admits of no remedy; but I believe the whole truth is, that labour is too dear, and the situation of the Cape too remote from the English market to enable it to compete with the wine countries nearer home.

A colony where labour is dear and scarce is ill qualified to vie with the advantages of situation and the redundant population of an old country. Under these circumstances, the po-

licy of encouraging the cultivation of the vine at the Cape is, to say the least, very doubtful; for one of the most important duties of a government is to direct the capital and energies of the people into the most profitable channels.

Cape Town and the country skirting the base of the mountains are, notwithstanding their proximity to the sea, very warm, and less healthy than the other districts of the colony. It being the spring season in this latitude, I found the weather very delightful. The pools were generally frozen over in the course of the night; yet there was no snow on the mountain-tops in the morning, and the sky was beautifully clear and serene. When the sun was two or three hours high, the reflection from the rocks of the Table Mountain made Cape Town very warm; but the heat in this country is not accompanied with that sense of oppression which we feel in England when the thermometer indicates the same degree. This may be accounted for by the greater dryness and elasticity of the air, which enable it readily to absorb the perspiration and keep the pores of the skin open.

Many circumstances combine to render the climate of South Africa more salubrious than that of almost any other part of the world. The two prevailing winds, the south-east and the north-west, passing over the ocean, or only partially over the land, preserve a great equality of temperature throughout the year; moderating the heat of summer, and tempering the cold of the winter months. The dryness of the climate also, and the openness of the country, exempt it from diseases arising from the putrefaction of vegetable matter; such as fevers and agues. The warm and dry state of the atmosphere has an extraordinary effect in dispelling that depression of spirits which is so annoying to some constitutions in the humid climate of Great Britain.

The diseases of the inhabitants are seldom dangerous, and are generally caused by repletion, or want of exercise. In some parts of the colony, the residents are subject to stone and gravel, attributable to the quality of the water, which is frequently brackish, from being impregnated with sulphate of magnesia. Diarrhœas are very frequent in situations where

sudden changes of temperature take place, as in deep valleys near the base of the mountains, or are caused by drinking bad water. They are most prevalent in the spring and autumn, but are rarely obstinate or dangerous. Pulmonary consumptions are uncommon among the Dutch and English, but very frequent among the Hottentots, from a scrophulous taint, and their habit of sleeping on the ground. Many of these people have also a pernicious habit of smoking a plant called "dacha," a kind of wild hemp, which is well known, even to themselves, to occasion consumption, if the practice be continued for a long time. The plant produces stupefaction, and in time weakens the intellect and destroys the nerves. The "dacha rookers" are held in great contempt by the tobacco smokers of their nation, who never fail to reproach them with the propensity in their quarrels. The climate of the Cape is found beneficial in incipient consumption, but not in the more advanced stages of the malady.

There is another disease, which is very common among the Dutch who live along the ranges of mountains from the neighbourhood

of Cape Town to the district of George, called the "zinkins," affecting one side of the face with pain and swelling, and which, though not dangerous, is exceedingly troublesome. This complaint very rarely affects the English, and seems to be occasioned by the habit the Dutch have of sitting in the hot weather between two open doors. That dreadful disorder, the leprosy, is not uncommon among the natives of the colony; and there is an institution for patients afflicted with this malady in the district of Swellendam. It is remarkable, that the very few natives of Europe who have been thus affected, have been addicted to the use of pork and other gross diet. It is worthy of observation in this place, that the Hottentots, Kaffres, and the other original inhabitants of South Africa, have universally a strong dislike to pork as an article of food.

The Dutch colonists are a tall race, with broad shoulders and large limbs; but they are of a lax fibre, and have a great tendency to become corpulent early in life. So general is this disposition to corpulency, that they fancy no

one can be healthy without it; and, of course, it is considered an essential ingredient in beauty. A Dutchman, in describing a handsome female, usually adds, that she is "dik en vet"—thick and fat—as the *sine qua non* of feminine loveliness. Notwithstanding the tall stature and bulk of the Dutch, I have often had occasion to remark their great inferiority in point of muscular strength to the English.

It has been observed, that Europeans possess greater physical power than the inhabitants of uncivilized countries. If we understand by this the absolute vigour of muscle exercised in any particular effort or feat of limited duration, the observation holds good as it respects the Hottentots and Kaffres, who are both inferior in this respect to the English, and even to the Dutch colonists; but, in enduring strength, or the ability to support a moderate exertion of the muscles for a length of time, as in travelling on foot, they are more than their equals. The same remark holds good with regard to English horses and the horses bred in the colony. It is thus that Providence nicely apportions the capa-

bilities of man and the brute creation to the situations and countries in which they are destined to live.

Many of the old colonists are descendants of the French Protestants, who settled in the "Franche Hock," near Cape Town, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and introduced the cultivation of the grape into the settlement. Though these people have entirely lost their original language and manners, and have intermarried with the Dutch, they still retain some physical qualities that distinguish them from the other colonists. They are less phlegmatic and possess a livelier expression of countenance, have brighter eyes, and are altogether, better looking than the Dutch.

I had anticipated much pleasure from ascending Table Mountain. Choosing therefore a cool day, I set off alone, about twelve o'clock, taking what appeared to me the most direct road. After struggling through a thick plantation of the silver-tree, I emerged near the gorge of a tremendous ravine, with a footpath in the bottom, which led, by an exceedingly steep ascent, to the summit. As I ad-

vanced, the ravine gradually became narrower, until it appeared like a huge fissure, as if the mountain had been cloven asunder by an earthquake, the rocks rising in awful grandeur on either side perpendicularly like colossal walls.

There was a solemn stillness in the scene, which was interrupted from time to time by a hoarse roar from a troop of baboons that were playing their gambols among the rocks above me. Even the birds had nearly disappeared from this wild spot, and the only living creatures to be seen along the rugged path were some black lizards running over the stones. It soon became necessary to use my hands as well as feet, to make my way among the fragments of rock which had fallen from the sides of the chasm, or been washed down by the torrents. The path had now become so steep, that, accustomed as I had been to rocks, I became almost giddy when I looked back on the road by which I had ascended, and could not help feeling some anxiety how I should get down again. The remaining part of the ascent, however, was not worse than what I had already over-

come; and, scrambling on with hands and feet among the rocks, I soon reached the summit of the mountain.

The road I had taken was the only practicable approach on the side of the town, and I carefully marked it with some stones, to prevent any mistake in descending; the neglect of which precaution had been the occasion of several people losing their lives by falling from the precipices which everywhere environ the top of the mountain. From an adjoining platform of rock, I enjoyed a splendid view of Cape Town and Table Bay, and the blue mountains of Hottentots-Holland, at forty miles' distance, which interrupted the further prospect in that direction. On the other side, nothing met the eye but the wide ocean as far as the sight could reach, and the solitary magnificence of desolate rocks and mountains. Yet, even at this elevated spot, the mountain was covered with beautiful heaths and shrubs.

I have often heard it said, that springs are found rising from the most elevated points of high mountains, which are supposed to be conveyed thither by subterranean ducts, from

mountains still higher. Supposing this for a moment to be the case, it may naturally be asked, whence these other mountains derive their supplies? The absurdity of the theory is too obvious to require any refutation. I was told that there was a spring on the highest point of Table Mountain; but here, as in every other spot regarding which there is a similar story, I indeed found springs, not rising from the highest point, but under a long slope or inclined plane, of sufficient extent to receive an adequate supply of rain and dew, at an elevation where there is not much evaporation.

The view from Table Mountain, though grand and magnificent, was at the same time rather sombre and desolate; for, however beautiful the natural productions of the uncultivated country may be when examined in detail, the general effect of them at this distance was as unsatisfactory to the eye as the bleakest heaths in Scotland. I came down the mountain, as may be supposed, much quicker than I ascended it, and reached home by five o'clock, not at all fatigued with my excursion.

In the evening I attended the funeral of a Dutch gentleman, who was father-in-law to an English merchant, a friend of my brother. He had died the day before of gout in the stomach. The company were received at the street-door by two portly personages, upwards of six feet high, whose full-fed countenances expressed anything but sorrow, and indicated that they were thinking much more of the substantial supper which would follow, than of the melancholy occasion of their meeting. They were probably the undertakers also; who, like doctors and lawyers, are not always without some consolation in the misfortunes of their dearest friends. After refreshments had been handed about to the company, we proceeded by torch-light to the churchyard.

During the procession, two young Dutchmen, who walked before me, were talking pretty loudly, discussing the character of the defunct in no very measured terms: at last one of them made some observation which excited a laugh among the mourners near them. So much for the refinement of the Cape-Dutch! who rarely feel much themselves, and consider it quite

superfluous politeness to pay any regard to the feelings of others.

In about a fortnight I was joined by my brother, who set off for Cape Town on horseback as soon as he heard of my arrival, followed by a little urchin of a Hottentot, who led a spare horse, and in his appearance and manner of riding much resembled one of those monkeys exhibited about the streets of London mounted on a dog's back.

The appearance of my brother with two hundred settlers, who were indentured to him in 1817, was hailed by the English inhabitants as a great benefit to the colony; but, like many others who lead the way in new enterprises, he was far from reaping any advantage himself adequate to the magnitude and risk of the undertaking. He had selected his people, who were all Scotchmen, from the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, with the greatest care; taking only such as could furnish the best testimonials of character from their last employers and the clergymen of their respective parishes. The terms he offered to the artisans were, to convey them to the Cape, on condition

of their agreeing to serve him for a year and a half, and being supplied by him with food and clothing; or, each individual was to pay him 30*l.* before leaving Scotland, in which case he would be free on his arrival. But if the mechanic did not choose either of these modes, he was to pay 60*l.* after his arrival, in work or money, as my brother should think fit. To the labourers he made similar proposals—with this difference, that they should serve him three years, instead of a year and a half. Fortunately for my brother, most of them preferred paying him in money after their arrival; which saved him from a great loss, as he could not possibly have found profitable employment for, or been able to manage, such a number of discontented spirits. Had he been able to anticipate the difficulties he afterwards experienced, he might have made better arrangements for his own security; but he was led into the undertaking by some interested individuals at the Cape, who promised their assistance, but drew back when they found that it was not likely to turn out so well as they expected.

On his arrival at Cape Town, he found a

considerable demand for labour, and was enabled to sell several of the indentures of his people to the English inhabitants of the town and its vicinity; but, for a great number, he could find no profitable employment, and had to keep them at a considerable expense. The majority of them soon dispersed over the whole colony, and were engaged by the farmers, who enticed them into their service, and paid my brother no part of their wages, notwithstanding a proclamation issued by the Governor, forbidding their being employed without his consent. To add to his misfortunes, on prosecuting some of the people who had illegally hired his servants, he soon found that he was saddled with the greater part of the law expenses, and was therefore playing a losing game. Law has been often called a lottery; but the court of justice at the Cape was, in those days, worse than a lottery. Most of the members of that court were at this time slave-holders; and, as may be supposed, not much inclined to encourage the importation of free labour.

It may appear surprising that a number of individuals selected with so much caution in a

country where the lower classes are so moral as in Scotland, should so easily break through their engagements. But the truth is, we are apt to over-rate the character of the lower classes in a country where bad conduct soon brings its own punishment, from their being thrown out of work; while, at the Cape, no such check exists, on account of the scarcity of employment; so that, whatever the labourer's character may be, he will always find people glad to hire him.

Notwithstanding the bad conduct of many of the servants my brother carried out, several of them voluntarily repaid him, after some years, when they had improved their circumstances; and, taking them altogether, they were very superior in point of character to any of the other parties who afterwards came to the colony.

It is but fair to state on the part of the settlers who went out on these conditions, that the terms are peculiarly servile, and which nothing but necessity could induce them to agree to. Observing on their arrival the high rate of wages received by others, and subjected to a hundred temptations, without the same re-

straints on their conduct which operate so powerfully in their own country, it is no wonder that the deceitful sophistry of self-interest should readily suggest plausible reasons for evading engagements that interfered with their liberty and stood in the way of their advancement. It was also too much for their feelings to be taunted with being "white slaves" by the Dutch at Cape Town, whom they despised from their being inferior to them in education. There were at that period scarcely any white people in the condition of day-labourers; and both the prejudices and interests of the slave-holders prompted them to foster discontent among the new description of labourers introduced into the colony, with the view of discouraging further emigration, which necessarily tended to lessen the value of their slaves.

Drunkenness is the besetting sin of the lower classes in all our colonies; and at the Cape, few of the working people escape falling into this ruinous habit. Such propensity is generally attributed to the cheapness of wine and spirits, and no doubt this circumstance is one cause of it; but, to suppose that it is the

only, or indeed the principal, occasion of it, is, I believe, a very erroneous opinion. If this were the case, we might naturally expect that the higher orders, who have greater means of indulgence, would be most addicted to intemperance; but experience shows us the contrary. We always find that the people most given to habitual intoxication are those who are, or have been, most restrained from it by necessity, independently of prudential considerations. We may instance discharged soldiers and sailors, and those among the working classes generally who, from indigent circumstances, have suddenly come into the receipt of high wages.

Nothing is more dangerous to the character of men than sudden changes from a state of artificial restraint to entire liberty of action. For this reason, I cannot think that any permanent good will be effected by imposing taxes on spirituous liquors, or by prohibiting their distillation. Enhancing the price of spirits at the Cape, will only have the effect of increasing the ruinous consequences of intemperance, without materially diminishing the evil itself, so long as the other causes of it continue in opera-

tion. When I proceed to speak of the frontier districts of the colony, I shall have occasion to offer other reasons for removing all restrictions on distillation from grain, which has so injudiciously been prohibited, to the great injury of the corn-growers. The prosperity of this class has been sacrificed to the interest of the wine-farmers of the Cape District, who enjoy a monopoly by exclusively supplying the whole colony with a cheap and pernicious spirit made from the refuse of their grapes.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Cape Town for the Interior.—Aspect of the Country.—Scarcity of Fuel.—House of an English Settler. —Ascent of Hottentots-Hollands Kloef.—Optical Illusion.—Grand Scenery.—Agricultural Produce.—Dutch Waggons.—Hospitality of the Farmers.—Dutch Manners. —Laudable Custom.—Gigantic Mountain Range.—Improved appearance of the Country.—Hints to the Traveller. —An eminent Colonist.—The Zonder End River.—Moravian Missionary Station.

THE excitement produced by the novelty of the objects at Cape Town and the manners of its inhabitants having in a great measure passed away, I was delighted when my brother was ready to start for the interior, of the beauty and fertility of which I had formed the most sanguine anticipations.

We left Cape Town at dawn of day, to avoid as much as possible the heat of the sun, and proceeded at a slow canter—a pace which the horses of the country are trained to, and

can continue for hours together. Our little Hottentot followed at a respectful distance, with his feet stuck through the stirrup leathers, which he could not reduce to the length of his legs.

Our course for several miles lay across an extensive plain, which terminated at the base of the Blaawe Berg, or Blue Mountains, and the mountains of Hottentots-Holland; over the latter of which ranges, a rugged road was constructed for communicating with the eastern districts of the colony.

The soil of the country in the first part of our journey was generally very sandy and arid; a cottage was occasionally to be seen, around which the land was of a better description, and where there was a spring to irrigate a patch of ground or a garden. Yet, poor as the soil might appear between the scattered habitations, which rose like wooded islands in the dreary waste, the surface was everywhere covered with luxuriant shrubby plants and splendid heaths several feet in height, all of which were strangers to me.

In several places I observed excavations in

the sandy hills, whence large roots of trees in a half-decayed state are dug for fuel and sold in Cape Town.

The scarcity and dearness of fuel in the neighbourhood of the town have led individuals to give their attention to the cultivation of the native silver-trees on the sides of the Table Mountain; and there is little doubt that *fir* plantations on the sandy flats, if properly encouraged by the Government, would succeed equally well, and amply remunerate individuals who might be induced to make the attempt.

As we advanced, the soil gradually improved, until we came to a firm clay of a bright red colour, tolerably clothed with a short sweet herbage, and which seemed only to want water to render it abundantly productive. While the sun was yet high, we reached the base of the mountain, and refreshed ourselves and our horses at the house of an Englishman, who, quitting a seafaring life, had taken up his abode in this wild and romantic situation.

He had been captain of a merchant-vessel trading to the Cape, and having been taken with the appearance of the country, made up

his mind to become a settler, and had induced the mate and some of his crew to join him in his new mode of life. He was a shrewd fellow, and, besides his agricultural speculations, had taken especial care to establish himself where he could carry on an advantageous trade with the farmers from the eastern districts, whose waggons were obliged to pass his door in descending from the mountain. For this purpose, he kept an extensive assortment of goods in store, which he sold at lower prices than those demanded by the merchants in Cape Town, and took wheat and other produce of the farmers in exchange for them. Quite an enthusiast in his newly-adopted vocation, and undaunted by difficulties, he pursued his farming operations with unremitting ardour. In spite of his total ignorance of agriculture, he had succeeded in raising a considerable number of pumpkins among the rocks which encumbered his ground: this he regarded as a kind of miracle, and boasted of the feat with the most undisguised exultation.

We were not a little amused with the description he gave, in true nautical phraseology, of all his blunders and misadventures, and

the seamanlike manner in which he had overcome all difficulties: he appealed from time to time to some of his crew for a confirmation of his statements, which he thought we doubted by our smiling during the recital. Whenever he was at a loss for the proper name of any of his "shore-going tackle," his trusty mate, or one of the crew, was always ready at his elbow with a grin and a word to help him out of his dilemma. They all messed together, and every thing was conducted on terms of perfect equality. It was pleasing to observe the appearance of hearty cordiality that prevailed in their little establishment, which the vexatious jealousy of the Cape Town merchants, who purposely bid against them at their sales, tended only to confirm.

Having partaken of the best fare of our hospitable entertainer, and rested our horses, we resumed our journey, and commenced the toilsome ascent of Hottentots-Hollands Kloef, as the pass is called. The clearness of the atmosphere in this country, and the bold outline of the mountains, occasion an optical illusion in judging of the distance of objects, which some

experience is required to correct. In looking towards the range of mountains we were now crossing, from Cape Town, no one unaccustomed to these latitudes would imagine that the distance exceeded twenty miles, when in point of fact it is nearer forty.

The prospect from the commencement of the pass to the left of the road is gloomily grand and magnificent. The wild ravines, and dark rocky precipices overhanging their bases, strike an awe into the mind, and almost overwhelm it with an humbling sense of human weakness and insignificance in the mighty scale of creation. This feeling is heightened by the desert grandeur of the scene. Here we have the huge misshapen blocks cast rough and rude from Nature's manufactory—the foundations of the world, hove up from the dark unknown abyss, laughing to scorn all the tiny efforts of man and his wisdom.

In ascending the rugged pass, we were soon obliged to dismount, in mercy to our tired horses, and lead them after us to the summit. On our way, we met with several waggons heavily laden with corn, butter, and poultry,

for the Cape Town market; and, among other persons, a neighbour of my brother's, an old Prussian, who had come one hundred and eighty miles with two waggons laden with the produce of his farm.

The distance from which such produce is carried to market in this colony will appear extraordinary to the English reader, particularly when he is told that a Cape waggon will carry only about twelve muids of wheat, which generally sell in Cape Town at from ten to twelve rix dollars, or from fifteen to eighteen shillings British money, per muid, which weighs from one hundred and eighty to one hundred and ninety pounds, or nearly three bushels. The highest price of a waggon-load of wheat will thus be 10*l.* 16*s.* A waggon, if purchased of the maker, will cost about 45*l.* Each waggon, for a long journey, requires twelve oxen, which, at 1*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* per head (a very moderate price), will cost 22*l.* 10*s.* An ox-waggon proceeds at the rate of twenty-five miles a day; so that at least fourteen days, going and returning, will be spent on the road in travelling one hundred and eighty miles, the greatest distance

from which wheat is transported by land with any view of profit.

These statements will show how little is to be done in the way of *grain farming*, at any considerable distance from market, in a country which possesses so few harbours along the coast, and no inland navigation. It must be remembered, on the other hand, that most of the colonists make their own waggons at leisure times, and that they are exposed to no expenses on the journey, as they carry their provisions along with them, and pay nothing for grazing their oxen on the way; "Uit-span," or grazing places, being reserved for this purpose by the Government along the great roads.

When these circumstances are considered, it would be very unjust to blame the Dutch colonists for their indolence, with which some travellers, observing the natural fertility of the country, have so often taxed them.

I could not help admiring the light and elegant construction of the Dutch waggons, which form a remarkable exception to all their other articles, either for agricultural or domestic purposes. Though so slight in appearance, they

are made of the most durable materials the woods afford; and to allow sufficient play for the wheels on the rough and uneven roads which they have occasionally to encounter in the precipitous ravines, the bottom and sides are left quite loose, so that the axles of the fore and hind wheels can deviate from the parallel without straining, and thus enable this vehicle to go safely over deep ruts and holes which would overturn any English waggon. Some of our countrymen, with that contempt of foreign usages which distinguishes them, have introduced the heavy English waggon; but they soon found in this, as in other respects, that they would have done better had they profited by the experience of others.

There are no inns along the roads, and those who travel on horseback always avail themselves of the hospitality of the farmers, who rarely can be induced to accept of any remuneration for their entertainment. Enjoying in rude abundance all the necessaries of life, and many of its luxuries, the produce of their farms, they think themselves amply rewarded for their

substantial kindness by the news their visiter may have to give them in exchange.

By the time we had crossed the Palmiet river, a considerable stream, over which a wooden bridge had been constructed, where we paid a small toll, the sun was sinking behind the wild range of mountains we had just passed: we therefore stopped at one of the nearest farm-houses, and were immediately assailed by a parcel of furious dogs—as diversified a race of mongrels as ever puzzled a naturalist to describe.

The master of the house soon made his appearance at the door, and, addressing his noisy guards by name, "Vegyey Jaager," and "Voertzik Vitvoet mag de Duivel vang yullen almal," with great energy—dealing a kick to one, and throwing a beef-bone at another, which sent him yelping away on three legs—advanced with a composed and ceremonious air to receive us, holding out one hand while he slightly raised his hat with the other. He now recognised my brother, and asked us if we would "saddle off" our horses and enter his habitation.

We found the "vrow" seated at a little table opposite the door: she received us with the cold phlegmatic welcome peculiar to the Dutch ladies, who never shake hands with strangers according to the universal custom of the men.

Barrow has described the Dutch manners so admirably, that I need not repeat what he has said of them; for, excepting that the ceremony of saluting the females has fallen into disuse, to the great relief of bashful and fastidious travellers, time has produced but little alteration in their external habits.

Our host was rather a character in his way. His tall upright figure was surmounted by a narrow-crowned black hat, with broad straight brims somewhat torn and ragged at the edges; he wore a coarse blue great-coat with horn buttons, and a pair of velveteen trousers, with a pair of long white worsted stockings pulled up over his knees and secured with leather thongs. He had a grizzly beard on his chin of a fortnight's growth, beneath which appeared a dirty check shirt, open at the breast, displaying a tanned skin covered with strong black bristles.

He and his wife were equally dirty and slovenly in their habiliments.

While we were telling him the Cape Town news, and acquainting him with various curious particulars regarding England which excited his admiration to the verge of incredulity, the other members of his family entered the room. After shaking hands with us and wishing us "Goe'en avond," they seated themselves in silence, and continued staring at us without altering a muscle, unless when my brother, who was spokesman, related something which they had not heard from other English visiters, when our host, who, like his countrymen, was an excellent listener, would exclaim, "Alamagtig! mynheer, dat is dog wonderlyk!"* Hereupon, the young men would slowly turn their heads towards each other with a look between surprise and incredulity, but without allowing the shadow of a smile to appear on their countenances.

A large bucket of warm water was now brought in by a slave-woman, who proceeded

* "Almighty! sir, that is wonderful!"

to wash the feet of the company, male and female, in the same vessel. While this operation was going on, our host handed down a bottle and wine-glass from a square recess in the wall, and was going to pour out a "soupie," or dram of brandy, for my brother, when, as if recollecting the more refined habits of his guests, he held up the glass between his eye and the candle, and discovered, what he had more than half suspected—that it was not over-clean. Quietly dipping it into the above-mentioned bucket of dirty water, which had just reached him, he then proceeded, with the greatest nonchalance, to polish it with the corner of his neckcloth.

As may be supposed, this specimen of cleanliness had by no means the effect of inducing us to partake of the proffered beverage, which, somewhat to the surprise of our host, we civilly declined. After discussing a most substantial supper, consisting of stewed mutton, cut into small pieces, into which each unceremoniously stuck his fork, and boiled barley and milk, which concluded the entertainment, we retired early to rest.

The Dutch colonists, though they rarely accept of any remuneration for the entertainment of the travellers themselves, never refuse payment for what their horses consume. This laudable custom precludes any feeling of delicacy on the part of their guests in asking for the forage they may require. Whatever the circumstances of these farmers may be—and many of them have very considerable property—they never have the least objection to retail any articles of produce they have in their houses, in the smallest quantities.

As soon as the sun was up, we saddled our horses, and, taking leave of our host, pursued our journey. The road lay over a country diversified by gently swelling hills, near the base of a continuous range of gigantic mountains on our left, which from time to time broke upon our view in all their rude magnificence, rising precipitously to the height of nearly four thousand feet from the plain below. This is one of those extensive chains which run nearly parallel with the eastern coast of the colony to its extremity on the Kaffre frontier.

The Cape mountains have a very peculiar

appearance when compared with the hilly parts of Britain; the latter having much greater variety in their forms and magnitude, and being more diversified by the contrast produced by intervening tracts of rich valley; whereas, the Cape mountains have a stiffness and formality in their aspect. This arises from their running in unbroken chains of nearly equal height, dividing the fertile country like huge walls, and presenting an impenetrable barrier to the traveller who attempts to cross them. From this circumstance, the country generally, though it possesses many situations of surpassing beauty and grandeur, is somewhat deficient in variety when the different prospects are compared with each other.

The surface of the country from the time we left Hottentots-Hollands Kloef had been gradually improving, and was better covered with grass. There were more springs, as well as more atmospherical moisture, along the mountains, where the farms are the most numerous. The young corn was springing up, and the fields near the farm-houses presented a brilliant verdure, when contrasted with the sombre hue of

the grass, which was still of a dry and coarse quality, and closely eaten by the numerous cattle and flocks of sheep.

To our right, at some distance from the mountains, the country was of the most uninteresting description, and had a cold, forbidding aspect, being without wood, and the habitations few and far between. The mountains intercepting the moisture which ascends from the sea, give rise to numerous springs, and thus a general humidity is imparted to the soil, which enables the farmers near them to grow every kind of grain and pulse without there being any necessity for irrigating the land. But to have a good garden and orchard, it is absolutely necessary to have the command of a constant spring of water.

This part of the colony, like the greater portion of it, is exceedingly deficient in wood, which is only to be found in the deep and sometimes inaccessible ravines among the mountains. Nothing can exceed the romantic beauty and grandeur of some of these sequestered woody spots that occasionally break the uniformity of this mountain range, which seems to

owe its origin to some dreadful convulsion of nature, which has rent it to its very foundation, leaving the bare perpendicular rocks towering up to an immense height on all sides.

The manners and habits of the Dutch have an extraordinary similarity from one extremity of the colony to the other, and it is only in compliment to the English that they ever deviate in the smallest particular from their long-established usages. The traveller would therefore do well so to time his journey that he may arrive at the farm-house where he intends to dine before twelve o'clock, and, after unsaddling his horse, (which he is always asked to do,) wait patiently until the table is covered, and then taking his place at the nearest cover, without waiting for an invitation, help himself to what he likes best, by harpooning it with his fork.

Any unnecessary politeness, as helping the ladies or those around him, will only excite astonishment at his outlandish manners, and much impede his making a hearty meal; for the Dutch swallow their food with extraordi-

nary despatch, barely allowing time for the necessary exercise of mastication. Should he arrive too late for dinner, he need not expect to be asked to eat anything, for they always conclude that if he wanted any he would have come in time.

In this respect, we were fortunate; for though we came to our halting-place too late for dinner, our host, who knew my brother's inattention to these niceties in his journeys to the Cape, immediately ordered a side-table to be covered for us, with the addition of a bottle of wine, which is rarely to be seen at the tables of the poorer description of farmers. Everything showed that our host, besides being far superior in manners and intelligence to most of the colonists in this part of the country, was a substantial, if not a wealthy, farmer.

He was one of those patriarchal characters so frequently to be met with throughout the colony, who so forcibly remind us of those described in Scripture, as possessing an extensive tract of land, with their children, children's children, bondsmen, and flocks of sheep and

cattle. The whole country round him was occupied by his married sons, inhabiting as good houses as his own, and being as well supplied with cattle and everything which in the rude simplicity of their habits is considered essential to comfort. His manners were free and rough, yet courteous withal; he was, in short, a highly respectable and independent old man; and if he was not just and humane to his slaves and dependants, his manly, open, and benevolent countenance, and the cheerful demeanour of his servants, much deceived me.

In the afternoon, we resumed our journey, and soon arrived at the "Zonder-end River," or river without end, as it has been called, from its long course. The stream was swelled from the rains in the interior, and we had to cross it on foot, by a long log of wood which was laid across, about a foot and a half in breadth. It required all the nerve that we could command to preserve our footing on this slippery and trembling support, for the impetuous rush of the torrent beneath made our heads giddy.

We carried over with us to the other side a long thong, the other end being tied to the neck of one of our horses, and by this contrivance swam them all over in safety.

About dusk, we arrived at the Moravian missionary station of Genadendaal, where we remained for the night.

CHAPTER IV.

Situation of Genadendaal.—Account of the Moravian Missionaries. — Employment of the Women. — Community of Property.— Restraints on Hottentot Servants — Their Improvident Habits.—Benevolent intentions of the Missionaries.—Curious mode of obtaining Wives.—Variety of African Exotics. — Knowledge of the Botanist. — Wild Animals. — The Rheebock Antelope. — The Duiker, or Ducker.—Village of Swellendam.—Economy of the Dutch. —Respect for the English.—The Buffel Jaagt River.—Missionary Station of Zuure Brack.—Conduct of Mr. S——. —Privations of the Hottentots.

GENADENDAAL is situated in a most romantic and sequestered nook among the mountains, and everything has been done which a command of running water can accomplish—and in this country water is everything—to render it fertile and beautiful. It was, indeed, as Campbell, the missionary, says on many occasions, "a fine situation for a missionary station." We were anxious to get a knowledge of the system of management of these Moravians, and of the

nature of their institution, from themselves. One of the missionaries, in the kindest manner, patiently answered our questions; my brother, as usual, being spokesman from his knowledge of Dutch.

I have since had some opportunities of gaining further information regarding these worthy people at another of their stations, from which I have been led to form opinions regarding their utility which I shall endeavour to communicate, as well as the particulars we were able to collect on the present occasion.

The Moravian missionaries enjoy all their property in common: they all meet together at their meals; they have a common garden, which is superintended by their wives in turn. Each of the men is brought up to some trade, at which he works through the day: one is a miller, another is a blacksmith, a third is a carpenter, and so forth—such trades being preferred as are likely to be most useful in an infant state of society.

In the evening, they all meet in the church, when that one whose turn it may be to preach expounds some portion of Scripture in language

adapted to the capacities of his hearers. Meantime the school is not neglected, the instruction of the scholars being also taken in turn by the missionaries, at certain hours which may the least interfere with their other numerous avocations. Besides superintending the garden, the women teach the female Hottentots needle-work, in which art some of them arrive at considerable proficiency. Each of the men has several apprentices, whom he initiates with great patience into his trade. The surplus proceeds arising from these varied sources of profit, above what is required for their own wants, are remitted to the common fund of the society in Europe, to be applied to the formation of other missions in different parts of the world.

Though the Moravian brethren have established an entire community of property among themselves, they informed us that they did not require the Hottentots on their institution to follow their example in this particular; which shows that, whatever beneficial results they might anticipate from this system among themselves in their capacity of teachers, they are

sensible that it is by no means calculated for general adoption. Indeed, to imagine that anything like an equality or community of property can ever be generally adopted by mankind, is to suppose that the passions, talents, bodily strength — and, in short, all the mental attainments and physical qualities of the different members of our species — should undergo a total change, and be reduced to an exact level.

If Mr. Owen can effect this change in the constitution of human nature, he is something more than man, and may be able to persuade the rich to throw their possessions into the common stock, and the slothful to become industrious, and join heart and hand in the establishment of some other "New Lanarks" or "New Harmonys."

Supposing such a system be inconsistent with human nature as it is found in civilized society, and inimical to the development of its moral capabilities, how little is it calculated to elicit the dormant energies of uncivilized nations sunk in sloth and ignorance, and who require every stimulus which individual interest

and ambition can apply to rouse them from the torpor of ages!

The Moravian missionaries are generally sensible and practical men, warmed with a sincere desire of instructing and improving the general condition of the people under their care, and less under the influence of that wild enthusiasm and ambition which so strongly characterize the other missionaries throughout the colony. But their praiseworthy efforts to restrain vicious propensities and improvidence, have led them into an error which a more enlarged knowledge of mankind, and of the progressive steps by which society rises in the scale of existence, would have enabled them to avoid.

The error to which I allude is, their system of obliging the Hottentots who belong to their institutions to deposit all their earnings in their custody, supplying them in lieu thereof with such articles of wearing apparel or food as they may stand in need of; thus keeping them in a state of perpetual restraint, like children.

Though these poor creatures are in consequence most effectually prevented from spend-

ing their money in drink, to which vice they are particularly addicted, or from squandering it away, this compulsory measure has no effect whatever in permanently bettering their morals. On the contrary, it has the most obvious tendency to perpetuate their reckless and improvident habits, and to render them more open to temptation, so soon as the artificial check is removed. This is one of the principal causes of the languid and stationary condition of the Moravian missionary establishments; and it may safely be predicted, that as the political oppression which formerly impeded the improvement of the Hottentots has now been removed, they will soon be entirely deserted, unless this servile system be relinquished. Without some degree of liberty in these matters, there can be but little industry.

The missionaries informed us that there was only one instance on their institution of a Hottentot having accumulated any property; and that was of an individual who had been from his infancy almost entirely estranged from the rest of his nation. I have had ample opportunities, during my subsequent residence

in the colony, of observing the character of Hottentots who have come from the Moravian stations; and I have generally found them more improvident and lazy than those who came from other missionary institutions.

In making these observations on the Moravians, I have no intention of conveying any censure on their individual conduct, as no one at all acquainted with them can for a moment doubt that they act from a sincere belief that their arrangements are beneficial. These missionaries are a single-hearted, honest, and unaffected class of men, entirely free from cant, or any spirit of rivalry with regard to other sects engaged in the same cause; and if their institutions are conducted on a less liberal plan, it is easily accounted for by their early habits of thinking, and the manners of their own country. At the same time, it need not be a matter of surprise, that they are deceived by the order and regularity of conduct, and external decency of demeanour, which their timid and cautious policy for a time produces among their followers. The open and candid way in which the good missionaries explain all the peculiari-

ties of their sect, and their cheerful and unaffected manners, cannot fail to give any unprejudiced person the highest opinion of their sincerity and benevolence of intention.

They are furnished with wives from the parent society in Germany; and it was sufficiently obvious to us, that personal attraction was but little attended to in the selection of the helpmates for their distant brethren. One was lame, another wanted an eye, a third was somewhat ancient; however, all seemed pleased with their partners—especially the ladies, some of whom looked as if they had made a narrow escape from perpetual celibacy.* They laughed very heartily when they explained this peculiarity, and heard our objections to it. In this they showed their wisdom, as well as their good nature.

We had accompanied them to their evening

* A few years after our visit to Genadendaal, a friend of mine fell in with a Moravian sister on her way to join the husband assigned her by the society, and was much amused by the minute and curious questions she put to him as to the personal and mental qualifications of her betrothed, and laughed heartily at his expressing some surprise at her interrogatories.

service in the church; and, after supper, at which they were all assembled, men, women, and children, we were shown to a low building appropriated to bed-rooms for the accommodation of travellers. In the morning, we joined them at breakfast, after walking round the village, which was laid out in streets composed of miserable reed-huts thatched with rushes. The moment our meal was finished, all the missionaries, excepting the senior of the brethren, who was old and feeble, hurried away to their different mechanical occupations. After receiving their kind wishes, we took leave of them with a hearty shake of the hand all round, and, mounting our horses, pursued our journey.

Throughout the day we passed over a varied country, in which the great fertility of the farms, where the owners had running streams at command, formed a striking contrast to the aridity of the intervening pasture-grounds; but still there was much, even in the bleakest parts of it, to interest the mind. The endless succession of luxuriant plants and shrubs of the most novel and singular appearance and manifold hues, gave me the idea that I was wander-

ing through a vast garden of rare exotics. Any one can enter into this feeling who has observed how distinguished a place African plants occupy in the English hothouses and gardens: not a foot of ground is lost, or unproductive of something belonging to the vegetable kingdom, adapted to the soil or situation; and, if we believe that nothing has been created in vain, what an ample and delightful field for reflection does a journey through a country like this afford!

Were I a botanist, I could have given my readers a catalogue of exotics that would excite the astonishment of the uninitiated, and fill their minds with the most strange and indescribable ideas of the country. But a knowledge of that science is, I believe, by no means necessary to enjoy, in the highest degree, the contemplation of the rich and infinite productions of nature. The botanist may describe the varieties of the different species of plants, and point out their habitations; but it is principally to accident that we are indebted for the discovery of the useful qualities of the vegetable world: and it is only after these qualities have

been ascertained, that botanical science becomes really useful in perpetuating and extending this knowledge, however it may be attained.

In riding along, I was no less charmed with the novelty and beauty of the wild animals of the country. Occasionally we observed herds of the rheebock antelope quietly grazing on the sides of the low sloping hills to our right, with one generally on the watch to guard against surprise. If we chanced to pass to windward of them nearer than they judged to be safe, the sentinel would suddenly extend his long elegant neck, and, giving a sharp snort, away they would all bound as lightly as the wind, tossing aloft their graceful heads, until they reached the face of some distant hill, when they would stop all at once as if by common consent, and, turning half round, reconnoitre us so long as they thought they had anything to apprehend, and then quietly resume their grazing. The rheebocks, like many of the other species of antelope, rarely run straight up a hill, but wind round its base, which affords an opportunity to the hunter to gallop across in

a direct line, and, dismounting from his horse, to shoot them in passing.

From time to time, we started a duiker antelope, crouching in some tuft of brushwood, or among the rhinoceros bushes, a heathy-looking plant that skirts the great road in this part of the colony. The animal would dart away in a straight line, over hill and dale, with a speed that few greyhounds can equal. The duiker, or ducker, derives its name from its manner of plunging itself into cover. It is not a gregarious animal, like the rheebock, being never found with more than one in company. It is also both considerably smaller and much swifter.

In the evening, we reached the village of Swellendam, the seat of magistracy of the district of the same name, and took up our quarters for the night with one of the principal Dutch inhabitants, who understood a little English. He had accumulated a considerable fortune by contracting for the supply of provisions for a regiment of dragoons, which had been formerly stationed in the village, in those happy days for

the district when the farmers found a ready market for their produce close to their own doors.

Swellendam, which had formerly consisted of only a few scattered brick buildings, occupied by the Landdrost, or magistrate, and the other officers connected with the government of the district, entirely owed its short-lived prosperity to this apparently trifling circumstance. It now had extended in a single street to the length of a mile from the house of the Landdrost. A spring, that had been conducted into the village from a considerable distance, watered the gardens along the street; these were tolerably supplied with fruit.

Behind the village, a chain of immense mountains rises abruptly to a great height, thickly clothed with low shrubby plants, but nearly destitute of timber, excepting in the deep ravines in its face. Several of the villages of the colony, like Swellendam, have been indebted for their prosperity to their being the head-quarters for the troops; but, as soon as these are removed, unless when near a sea-port, they soon sink into poverty and insignificance.

Judging from our European manners, we should naturally expect that the neighbouring population would receive their supplies from the nearest village, and thus find a profitable employment for the retail dealers. But this is not the case with the Dutch, who, from their peculiarly saving habits and the little value they set upon time, generally prefer going a long distance in their waggons to the capital, to supplying themselves nearer home at somewhat higher prices. In these long journeys, which are the delight of the Dutchmen, they usually take their wives and families with them, and enjoy the opportunity of visiting their friends on the road. These circumstances will sufficiently account for the present poverty of Swellendam.

Our landlord was a curious compound of Dutch and English bluntness engrafted on Cape cunning, and a complete master of that kind of respectful flattery which so few men are proof against. He professed the most devoted attachment to the English, and affected to despise his own countrymen. Whenever my brother told him anything a little out of the common

way, he would throw himself into an attitude of the utmost astonishment, and, turning round to his wife, say to her in Dutch, loud enough to be heard by us, "You see, now! did I not always tell you that the English are a clever people?" He never lost an opportunity, when he met me alone, to tell me what a "groote agtenis," or profound respect, he entertained for my brother.

The house of mine host was much resorted to by the English who passed through this part of the colony, and he found his interest in flattering them; for, though he would not accept of any remuneration from us for his entertainment, he was not so nice with others, and calculated on my brother's recommending him to our countrymen. As might be expected, he was hated and envied by his townsmen, not because he praised the English—for they will all do the same when it serves their turn—but because his superior cunning enabled him to get their money.

We were now only about twenty miles from my brother's estate, or farm, which is known by the homely appellation of "Groot Vaders

Bosch," or Grandfather's Wood. The great road diverges at Swellendam from the line of the mountains; from which cause travellers along the eastern road lose several miles of the most magnificent and delightful prospects the country affords. Our course skirted the base of these mountains, which in height, as well as beauty of form, exceeded anything we had yet witnessed in African scenery. I have already noticed the progressive improvement in the verdure of the country the farther we advanced to the eastward. The tract between Swellendam and Groot Vaders Bosch suddenly assumed a new character; and the grass that clothed the narrow valley between the mountains and a lower range of hills to the right of the road, though far inferior to that of our English pastures, was of a fresher green and more succulent description than any we had yet seen.

Soon after quitting the village, we crossed the Buffel Jaagt river,* a fine stream which takes its rise a mile or two beyond Groot Vaders Bosch, and, after receiving numerous

* The River of the Buffalo Hunt. The buffaloes are now entirely extirpated in this part of the colony.

rivulets from the mountains, discharges itself into the Breede river, a few miles below the point where we forded it. We now entered the valley, following the windings of the river by a narrow foot-path in the face of a steep bank overhanging the deep pools formed by the rocky obstructions the stream meets with in its course.

The opposite bank was beautifully fringed with small trees and shrubs, tangled and matted over with vines and creeping plants in all the wild luxuriance of nature. Every mile or two, we passed neat white-washed houses seated in the little plains at the foot of the mountain, surrounded with vineyards and corn-fields, and shaded with rows of orange-trees.

The path by which we travelled was so narrow, that a false step of our horses might have precipitated us into the deep pools of the river beneath; and we were occasionally not a little incommoded by the sharp-pointed leaves of the aloes, that delight in these dry rocky banks.

We now descended into the valley, visited the missionary station called the Zuure Brack,

and stopped at a comfortable brick house, occupied by the missionary, Mr. S——, a little laughing round-headed German, who had formerly been a commissary in the Dutch service, but having been reduced to midshipman's half-pay, had taken up the trade of an instructor of the heathen.

The Zuure Brack was one of those lots of ground reserved for the use of the injured Hottentots, and was formerly of much greater extent than it is at present; but, by granting the surrounding country to the Dutch colonists, its dimensions were exceedingly reduced. Here, however, numbers of this unfortunate race had congregated, and, to the great annoyance of the farmers, managed to keep soul and body together with much less labour than was thought necessary to support the unwieldy carcasses of "Christen menschen," as the boors call themselves.

The captain, or petty chief, of this little tribe was furnished by government with a long brass-headed staff as a badge of the authority he was supposed to possess over his people, who procure a wretched subsistence by killing game, as well as from the milk of their cattle, of which they

could keep but a small stock. They also cultivated little patches of ground with the spade; but, as the extent of their lands was curtailed, their numbers increased, from the oppressions of the farmers towards those who served them.

To complete their misery, this notable missionary was sent among them,—the person to whom I have already alluded, and whose misdeeds, I am happy to say, have at last occasioned his expulsion. He persuaded the Hottentots to give their assistance in erecting his house, for which they were not paid, on the score of its being for their common benefit. Next, he got them to labour for months in leading out a spring of water from a ravine in the mountain, to irrigate a strip of rich land situated along its base: this he kindly allowed them to clear from brushwood, and bring into cultivation on their own account for a year or two; and then, the moment the principal difficulties were overcome, he very coolly appropriated the ground to his own use, without giving them any remuneration for their labour.

These proceedings were quite to the taste of the neighbouring farmers, for many of the Hot-

tentots even preferred returning to their service, to remaining under Mr. S——'s patronage. Justice was then, under the old government of the native Landdrosts, but a vain mockery, inasmuch, at least, as the Hottentots were concerned. The complaints of the people of the Zuure Brack at length reached Cape Town, and the district functionary was directed to inquire into them. The result of the investigation was, that Mr. S—— was allowed to remain for many years longer to tyrannise over these hapless people.

Nothing could exceed the appearance of wretchedness in the institution. The Hottentots occupied two or three rows of huts made of reeds, sewed with thongs to laths tied to posts planted in the ground. Some of these habitations were rudely plastered over with cow-dung and clay to keep out the wind, and thatched with rushes.

We observed several of the women cutting each other's hair close to the skin with knives or scissors; and I never recollect to have seen any of the gentler sex that inspired me with such disgust, both as to their personal appearance and uncleanly habits. Their clothing, too,

was of the most miserable description, many of the females having little more than a ragged petticoat, and a piece of an old sack, or a sheepskin with the wool on, thrown over their shoulders.

The men were somewhat better provided, having leather trousers, tied round the middle with a belt, which they often tighten to allay the pangs of hunger; and they had generally an old patched jacket, besides the "carosse," or blanket, made by sewing sheepskins together, in which they roll themselves up on the ground, to answer for bed and bedding.

These people have several wretched substitutes for food to which they resort when they have nothing better. Sometimes they will devour bits of bullock's hide roasted over the fire; at others, they eat the tender leaves of the "palmiet," a plant resembling flags, which grows in the rivers. This plant is very grateful to the taste; and, though it possesses hardly any nourishment, has the effect of deadening the sensation of hunger. On occasions of scarcity, they drink water in large quantities, and compose themselves to sleep, which they have the power of doing at will.

Such are the miseries to which the Hottentots voluntarily subject themselves to gratify their habitual indolence, and that inherent love of freedom which is so deeply implanted in the breast of a savage. So little do they think of these, as an European would suppose, insupportable privations, that they have often pointed out to me the before-mentioned and other kinds of "veldt koat," or field-food, laughingly exulting in the resources which bountiful Nature had supplied to enable them to subsist without being exposed to the more intolerable hardship of bodily labour.

My heart sickened within me at the deplorable and degrading picture of human nature exhibited by the original possessors of the soil, now sunk into a vicious and despised caste beneath the more favoured race; and I felt relieved from the painful feelings it excited when we were ready to pursue our journey.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

CHAPTER V.

Female Hottentots Bathing.—Neat Farm-houses.—Residence of the Author's Brother.—Description of his Estate.—Interior of the Dwelling.—A singular mode of building Houses.—Climate of the Colony.—Qualities of the Soil.—Aridity of South Africa.—Lofty Mountain Range.—Produce of the Land.—Effects of Summer Heats.—Agriculture of the Dutch Colonists.—Requisites for a successful Farmer.—Agricultural Implements.—Construction of the Dutch Ploughs.—Mode of preparing the Grain for Market.—Indian Corn.—Pumpkins and Melons.—Culture of Tobacco recommended.

A RIDE of eight miles terminated our journey. The valley became wider as we advanced; we had to ford the winding stream several times, and surprised divers parties of female Hottentots enjoying themselves with swimming in the deep pools near the crossings of the road. The moment they saw us, they raised a shrill outcry, and dived under the surface like ducks, or leaped into the water from the woody banks

like scared frogs, darting away into the dark recesses formed by the drooping branches of the trees which overhung the water, or popped up their round laughing faces above the surface as if exulting in their security.

Amused with the novelty of the scene before me, I could not help observing the very beautiful forms of some of the younger females; particularly of those of a mixed race, for they varied in colour from black to nearly white.

We passed two neat farm-houses, one of which was delightfully seated on a level peninsula formed by the river, near a perpendicular rock in the face of the mountain, with a little sloping wood at its foot, from whence a fine spring was led out to water the fruit-trees and vineyard. My brother's house at length appeared at two miles' distance, on a sloping eminence fronting the magnificent range of mountains on the left of our road, to which I have so often alluded, and which now became more diversified and picturesque, being broken by deep valleys and wild craggy ravines, where the nimble "klipspringer" antelope might be seen perched on

some narrow ledge on which hardly any other quadruped could find a secure footing, or bounding, as if by magic, along the verge of the precipice.

At the foot of a ravine, or "kloef,"* as it is here called, at the base of the mountain which supplied it with water for irrigation, was the garden, wherein the brilliant green of the orange and lemon contrasted with the more sombre hue of the chestnut. Beyond the house, the valley, after forming several verdant peninsulas, bounded by the steep banks of the rivulet fringed with brushwood and jungle, suddenly contracted into a narrow gorge between the mountains and the high grass hills; and, winding round to the right, again expanded into a little meadow of exquisite beauty, part of which the proprietor had laid out in an orchard. Here he had erected a small cottage, which was occupied by an old dragoon soldier and his Hottentot wife, together with a whole troop of hangers-on.

Above the point where the steep ascents ap-

* Or cleft,—an expressive term, of local origin, to describe those deep ravines which appear to be formed by some convulsion of Nature.

proached the mountains, appeared high rounded hills, densely wooded to their summits; and far overtopping the woodlands in the blue distance rose a lofty mountain, the commencement of a new range, extending for nearly two hundred miles to the eastward in a parallel line to the sea-coast.

This estate my brother had purchased from a Dutch colonist for 8000 rix dollars, or 600*l.*, when he first came to the colony. Besides an excellent orchard, there was an extensive vineyard, which yielded seven or eight leaguers of indifferent wine, and about a leaguer of tolerable brandy. The dwelling-house was nearly a hundred years old, though only constructed of clay,—in a manner that, I believe, is peculiar to the colony, and which I shall presently describe.

From the inequality of the ground whereon the building stood, its back wings consisted of only one story, while in front it was high enough to admit of a couple of store-rooms beneath the principal entrance, which was approached by a flight of steps from the road. At the top of the stairs, on a level with the

front-door, was a platform, or "stoep," as it is here called, with a bench at each end, where the Dutch delight to sit of an evening and smoke their pipes. A long hall occupied the centre of the dwelling, communicating directly with the bed-rooms on each side. The floors of this hall, and those of most of the bed-rooms, were made of clay, which is washed over from time to time with a mixture of cowdung and water, to prevent the dust from accumulating.

In a Cape farmer's house there is no privacy. The family sit at one end of their long halls, while the other is a kind of thoroughfare for the slaves and house-servants pursuing their culinary occupations, who overhear the conversation and know all the most private affairs of their master and mistress nearly as well as they do themselves. This did not suit my brother's habits; and he had therefore put up a partition in the middle of the hall, which precluded the objectionable intimacy, and at the same time shut out the view of the milk-churn, which the Dutch, who have always an eye to profit, never like to lose sight of for a moment. He had likewise, to the great astonishment of his neigh-

bours, introduced the novelty of a fireplace in his sitting-room. So obstinate is early habit, that though the winter nights are often very cold, these settlers scarcely ever have recourse to this simple contrivance. I have often seen them seriously inconvenienced for the want of this common comfort in their long airy halls, until, after becoming bankrupt with regard to animal heat, they have been fairly driven to bed with their jolly "frows" before eight o'clock in the evening.

These clay edifices, when the material is of the proper quality, are more durable than such as are built with the bricks of the country. They are constructed in the following manner: —A hole is made in the ground as near as possible to the intended site, and, after throwing the upper soil aside, a quantity of clay is mixed with water and well trodden by the feet of oxen until it is of the proper consistence; that is to say, as stiff as they can work it. When the foundation of the house is dug out,—for they do not generally build foundations in this dry country,—large square lumps of the wrought clay are laid along the ground exactly in the man-

ner of building sod walls. When the first layer is placed all round and levelled with a spade, and the clay dried sufficiently, (which is very soon the case in this climate,) a second layer is arranged in the same manner above it, and so on till the wall is a few feet in height; and then they dress and level it with a sharp spade. This process is continued until the whole wall is completed. They afterwards make the roof, and thatch it by sewing successive layers of reeds or rushes to the rafters. This will give a sufficient idea of the simple operation of erecting a clay dwelling; and it is sometimes useful for colonists to know how to house themselves without the assistance of a regular mason, who is not always to be had in an infant settlement.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to give him a slight sketch of the part of the colony I at this time inhabited, which my long residence afforded me ample opportunity of describing. The want of this kind of knowledge, which travellers have rarely time to acquire, has often led new settlers into the most unlucky mistakes as to the capabilities of the situations

they have selected for the scene of their exertions.

The climate of this colony is so dissimilar to that of Great Britain, and other European countries, that the system of agriculture to be pursued in it requires a corresponding modification. The most striking characteristic of the settlement, throughout its whole extent, is its dryness: this, however, is subject to considerable variations, arising from situation and other circumstances.

The success of the emigrant, in any particular branch of agriculture he may prefer, must therefore greatly depend on his knowledge of the local causes which affect the qualities of the soil, whether as to moisture and aridity, or as to its other inherent capabilities of becoming productive when sufficient humidity is not wanting.

In Great Britain I believe there are no situations which cannot be made to yield the different kinds of grain usually cultivated, from want of moisture *alone*. In South Africa it is otherwise; for a very large proportion of the country, simply from want of moisture, is totally

incapable of producing any kind of grain: though when this defect is obviated by artificial irrigation, it becomes so fruitful as to yield from eighty to a hundred-fold of wheat. It generally happens where grain can be cultivated without the aid of artificial irrigation, that the soil yields smaller returns in proportion to the quantity of seed sown.

Taking, therefore, a general view of the Cape settlement in reference to its climate and its want of inland navigation, it is to be regarded as better adapted for the purposes of stock-farming than for the culture of grain. I do not, however, mean to say, that when the population of the country shall have increased, and labour become more abundant, it may not be in a condition to extend its cultivation to such a degree as to leave a large surplus for exportation; but this can only apply to a comparatively small portion of its superficial extent, and to such situations as are within a convenient distance of its different sea-ports.

If we cast a glance at the map of the world, we shall observe that almost all the countries

situated in a similar latitude to the Cape colony are remarkable for their aridity; and where this observation does not hold good, it will be found that the rivers of such countries take their rise either within the influence of the tropical rains, or in higher latitudes where the atmospherical moisture is more abundant. The only exceptions we find to this general rule will be, where the land has a large portion of its interior surface covered with lofty mountains which attract and retain the exhalations from the sea and the earth.

These facts account satisfactorily for the aridity of the southern extremity of Africa, for none of its rivers rise between the tropics; and though it possesses lofty and extensive chains of mountains, these do not occupy a great part of its surface, for, as I have formerly remarked, they only intersect the country in narrow ranges, with extensive plains between them, and are thus insufficient to produce permanent rivers. There are also other local causes that account for the aridity of a region derived from the nature of its stratification; and, without the aid of an extensive knowledge

of geology, we may be able, by a little observation, to arrive at many useful conclusions as to the adaptation of a country, or any part of it, to the different purposes of agriculture. After these preliminary observations, I shall endeavour to communicate an idea to the reader of the nature of that portion of South Africa which suggested them.

The lofty chain of mountains near Groot Vaders Bosch, which, judging from Table Mountain, I should conjecture to be at least four thousand feet high, run nearly parallel to the coast at the distance of about forty miles. They consist of a single range of hard white sandstone, rising abruptly on the side next the sea; but they are much lower on the inland side, from the sudden elevation that takes place in the general level of the interior of the country. The effect of this arrangement is, that while the southern face of the mountains detains the clouds and exhalations borne by the winds from the sea, which descend in frequent showers and fertilize the land near them, on the northern side rain sometimes does

not fall for ten or twelve months together, though only at the distance of twelve or fifteen miles.

A narrow tract, from a mile to a mile and a half in breadth, in which Groot Vaders Bosch is situated, extends along the southern base of the mountains, and is capable of producing all kinds of grain and pulse without artificial irrigation; but still a running stream is requisite for fruit-trees and many kinds of vegetables. The ground in this narrow valley is manured every second or third year, and yields from fifteen to twenty-five returns of wheat on an average.

An European farmer would like to know the produce per acre; but I conceive that the multiplying power of the soil forms a better criterion to judge of its natural fertility. Land is here of little value, and the keep of oxen is next to nothing; so that it is more to the interest of the agriculturist to cultivate a large extent of ground in a rough way, in a country where the climate does so much for him. The soil of this valley is generally of a sandy clay,

and, as in almost every part of the colony, becomes so hard in dry weather, that without moistening rains no plough can touch it.

Proceeding towards the coast, high, rounded, grassy hills succeed, intersected by long ravines, with small clumps of wood and jungle in the hollows. The soil is a clay lying on sandstone or clay-slate, in a very much inclined and often vertical position; and, as may be expected, there are no constant springs to be found, the inhabitants depending on natural ponds of water, remaining in the beds of the periodical streams, for supplying their flocks during the summer season.

Gradually, as we recede from the mountains, the crops become more uncertain, from the absence of the necessary humidity, so that at last every second or third crop is usually a failure. To make up for this in some degree, when the settler does get a crop of wheat, it yields from seventy to ninety-fold. It is, however, a good grazing district for sheep, horses, and horned cattle.

As we approach the coast, the country be-

comes flatter, until the clay-slate disappears, and we have extensive plains with scarcely any herbage, and the sandstone again showing itself through the scanty soil. There is a little more moisture, however, from the sea-dews and rain, and a few weak springs are to be found near the shore; so that here the crops are more certain than in the intermediate country.

It is a fact worthy of observation, that the land which in England would suffer most from drought is, at the Cape, most capable of enduring it: this is occasioned by the greater heat and dryness of the climate, which affect the soil to the depth of as many feet as in England it would to inches below the surface. Thus, if we suppose that the inclination of the earth's axis should be altered so that England would be removed to the latitude of the empire of Morocco, and the Cape of Good Hope proportionally to the southward of its present latitude, we should then find that — while a large portion of England would become extremely sterile, and its springs and rivers be dried up in the summer season — the extensive

arid plains of the interior of South Africa would abound in perennial streams, and their surface be covered with perpetual verdure.

We are so much accustomed to hear of the sands of Africa, that people unacquainted with the Cape generally suppose that the same characteristic applies to it as well as to the other parts of the continent; whereas, on the contrary, the soil of by far the larger portion of the colony is a rich clay. It would, indeed, be well for the country were sand more abundant on its surface; for experience proves, that wherever the soil is rather sandy, it is less dependant for its productiveness on natural or artificial irrigation.

The clay soils in most situations become so excessively dry and hard during the warm season, that the roots of the grain cannot penetrate them in search of moisture and nourishment; and even the natural grasses are burnt up to such a degree in dry seasons, that great numbers of horned cattle, and even sheep, perish for want of food. This remark is, however, particularly applicable to the more inland parts of the country; that is to say, to the northward

of the chains of mountains which traverse the whole extent of the eastern districts in a parallel line to the coast at the distance of from eight to fifty miles.

Where the land is more sandy and friable, the roots can spread themselves to procure nourishment, or descend in quest of moisture to a sufficient depth. In digging a well, I have sometimes found grass roots at the depth of nine or ten feet below the surface; and in searching for water in soils of this description, the verdure of the grass during the dry season of the year will be found an excellent criterion for judging of the probable chance of success in any particular situation. These observations naturally lead me to the subject of the agriculture of the Cape colony.

It has been too much the habit of my countrymen to indulge in an undue contempt of the mode of cultivation practised by the Dutch colonists, before they have been sufficiently acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of climate and situation by which their customs in this regard are regulated. Imperfect as the agriculture of the Dutch undoubtedly is, we

have generally in the course of our experience had reason to see our error, and to entertain more respect for the established usages of the country. The truth is, we have had a great deal to learn from the old colonists; and they also have had much to acquire from us. Nothing is more common in England than for farmers, when they remove to another county, to fall into a similar mistake, simply from not reflecting that the mode of cultivation must always vary according to local peculiarities. Settlers who are totally unacquainted with agriculture, for the most part are successful in the first instance, because they are compelled by necessity to rely implicitly on the instructions of the older inhabitants.

In speaking of agriculture, I may safely lay it down as an axiom, that that mode of cultivation is the best which yields the largest returns of profit with the least consumption of labour or capital; and he is unquestionably the best farmer who makes the greatest advantage from his land in the long-run. The agricultural implements of the Dutch require, indeed, much improvement; but they are made by

themselves, at times when they have no other profitable employment. The huge size of their ploughs, in particular, has been found fault with; and their construction is in some respects very objectionable, as they require so many more oxen to draw them than should be necessary. This, however, the farmers care little about, as they have plenty of these animals; and whether they yoke in twelve or sixteen at a time, is to them a subject of indifference, so that they get quickly through their work.

In this dry climate, it is a matter of great importance to seize the opportunity of ploughing when the ground has been softened by recent rains; for if the farmers lose these opportunities, it soon becomes too hard to be wrought. With this view, they make their ploughs very large, to enable them to take a wide furrow, and thus expedite their operations.

In populous countries it is desirable to procure as large a crop as possible from every acre under cultivation, so that no ground may be lost: but here, where the agriculturists have no rent to pay and have an unlimited extent of arable land, this becomes an inferior considera-

tion. It is true, that by working the ground better, it would yield more; yet the difference of the produce would by no means compensate for the increased expense of labour.

There being no frosts in this country to destroy the grass and weeds, the farmers effect this object by taking as broad a furrow as possible, and laying it flat over so as to cover them effectually. Another advantage of this method is, that it enables the ground the better to retain the moisture. The ploughs used by the Dutch are constructed on the same general principle as the wheel-ploughs used in Suffolk; but in the application of the principle to the different parts, they exhibit a great want of mechanica contrivance so far as the facility of draught and the ease of the oxen are concerned. The huge share is made to incline downwards into the ground, so that the point is lower than the sole of the plough; and the mould-board is quite flat. It is curious to observe the expedition with which the farmers get through the soil with this rude implement, with twelve or sixteen oxen before it, turning over a sod of fourteen inches in breadth. The harrow is made

of three rough logs formed into a triangle, with wooden teeth, and some thorn-bushes tied behind to make all smooth after them.

In ploughing, three people are requisite. The farmer holds the plough; a Hottentot walks beside the half-wild oxen, armed with a huge bamboo whip, lashing right and left to keep them in the furrow and quicken their pace; and a boy leads the foremost animals.

We had swing-ploughs constructed at Groot Vaders Bosch, on the principle of those commonly used in Scotland, but much larger and stronger, by which as much work could be done as by the Dutch implement, and without its disadvantages.

The method of preparing the grain for market in this country reminds one of the particulars mentioned in Scripture relating to the mode pursued in Palestine, which was doubtless very similar. A large circle is marked out on some elevated situation near the house, about fifteen or twenty paces in diameter; and posts are planted round the circumference, to which strong rails are tied. The sod within the circle is pared off with a spade, and the ground care-

fully levelled. It is then smeared over with a mixture of fresh cowdung and water, to lay the dust. As soon as the tramping-floor thus prepared is dry, the sheaves are laid regularly round the outer edge, and a number of horses, generally from fifteen to twenty, are turned into the circular enclosure. A Hottentot with a long whip next takes his station in the centre and drives them all round at a trot, occasionally shifting his position, in order that the grain may be all equally trodden. From time to time two or three people turn the grain over with forked sticks while the horses are resting. In an hour or two, according to the quantity on the floor, the grain is completely separated from the husk, and the straw broken into small pieces. The horses are now removed, and the workmen again enter with their forked sticks, and commence throwing up the straw and chaff in the air until the wind has blown all they can lift with their forks over the railing. The contents of the floor, which have been spread over it during the treading, are shovelled up to the outer edge of the circle, and the horses are again introduced to complete their part of the la-

bour. The men renew the operation of throwing up with shovels—for their forks are now useless—the mixed mass, until nothing remains on the floor but the grain, mingled with the joints of the straw, which are too heavy to be carried away by the wind. There is some dexterity requisite in throwing according to the strength of the wind, to prevent any waste, and in spreading the grain so that the chaff may be easily separated from it. The grain and chaff are gathered together in a heap on the leeward-side of the floor, and a couple of people recommence throwing it up to windward, so that another heap is gradually formed.

The *fan* is now required. This simple and primitive implement is constructed by tying a bundle of a peculiar kind of strong elastic rushes to the end of a light handle, ten feet in length, with the tops outwards, and spread out like a common fan, by sewing them to a thin piece of wood near the handle to keep them in their place. The implement thus formed is like the letter Y, the upper part being the rushes spread out, and the lower part of the letter the handle. This I believe to be the fan alluded to in St.

Matthew, chap. iii. ver. 12:—"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The fan is from time to time moved lightly from side to side over the surface of the newly-formed heap, and catches the joints of the straw which remain among the grain, and sweeps them to the outer edge; and the throwing and fanning are continued alternately until nothing remains among the grain but some small clods of clay, which are broken from the floor by the horses' feet. These clods are afterwards removed by the tedious process of picking with the hand; which operation I shortened by having the grain trodden in a large iron pot with the feet, to break the clods, and again winnowing it. Some individuals have introduced the threshing-machine; but they have found the common mode so much cheaper and more expeditious, that they have generally discontinued its use. There are, however, two things requisite for the advantageous adoption of the manner of preparing the grain which I have

described—a dry climate and a good clay for the floor.

From the sandy nature of the soil in the corn country near Cape Town, the bread is exceedingly gritty; which is very disagreeable to those unaccustomed to it.

Indian corn, or maize, which forms a considerable article of food in the colony, is either planted in rows three feet apart, or more commonly sown broad cast; and, to succeed well, it should be cleared from grass and weeds once or twice while it is growing. It is the surest grain for a first crop, when properly managed, as the roots do not strike deep. As soon as ripe, the heads are broken off and hung up in a loft. When it is required for use, the grains are rubbed off. After steeping them for some time in warm water, they are stamped in a wooden block to remove the husk, and are then first boiled for some time; when the water is dried up, milk is added, and the boiling continued until the milk also has evaporated. It is then ready for use, and is an excellent and substantial article of nourishment, though somewhat dif-

ficult of digestion; and is therefore peculiarly adapted for working people, who can undergo greater labour on this than on any other kind of vegetable food.

The stamping is so very laborious and troublesome, that I cannot help mentioning an easier method of removing the husk, with which I have been furnished by a very intelligent friend who has lived many years at Hudson's Bay, where it is generally adopted. This mode consists in simply steeping the Indian corn in a strong ley of fresh wood-ashes and warm water, which cracks the husk in a very short time, when it may be removed by rubbing the grain between the hands; it is then washed in clean water, and is ready to be cooked. I have no doubt this plan will be found useful to my friends at the Cape; and it gives me pleasure to have it in my power to communicate it to them—should this work have the good fortune to travel so far.

Pumpkins and sweet melons are planted in holes about two feet or two feet and a half wide, and six or nine inches deep, which are nearly filled up again with the loose earth mix-

ed with a spadeful of dung, and three or four paces asunder. The surface of the holes being lower than the level of the ground, the young plants are thus enabled to derive more moisture from the soil round them.

It is much to be regretted that some system is not adopted by Government, or individuals, to instruct the colonists in the American mode of cultivating and manufacturing tobacco, as many parts of the country, from the great fertility of the soil, seem peculiarly adapted to the growth of that plant. Tobacco is in general use among the inhabitants, and might become an important article of exportation, being a less bulky commodity, in proportion to its value, than wheat. The Cape tobacco is the same plant as that propagated in Virginia; but the flavour is peculiarly rank and disagreeable. This may probably be occasioned by growing it on spots where cattle have been folded, as we can hardly suppose that it can arise from the quality of the soil, which varies so much in different parts of the colony.

CHAPTER VI.

Interests of the Farmers.—Cultivation of Wheat.—Tea and Coffee Plants.—A Dutch Luxury.—Production of Silk.—General Scarcity of Water.—Extensive Grants of Land.—Rearing of Cattle recommended.—Grasses of the Country.—Pasture Lands.—Management of Milch Cows.——Profits of a Cattle Farm.—Strange Disease in Horses.—Mode of accounting for it.—Dutch Mode of breaking in a Colt.—Inferiority of the Cape Sheep.—Improved Wool.—Hints as to the Encouragement of Manufactures.

It is evidently the interest of farmers to give their attention to the cultivation of such articles as will best bear the expense of a long land-carriage and are raised with least labour. Wheat, where ground is abundant and there are no woods to clear, is certainly the article which can be produced with the least expense; but comparatively few situations in the colony are within a moderate distance of sea-ports, and it is too bulky to be brought from a great distance with advantage.

Mercantile people at the Cape are often led to suppose, from the cheapness of land-carriage, that it is only want of industry which prevents the farmers from extending their cultivation. The fact is, that the price they receive for their grain, when it is transported from a greater distance than sixty or seventy miles, if it defrays the expenses of cultivation, will not enable them to extend it. What the farmers earn in this case must rather be considered as merely paying them their wages as labourers, and not the profits of agriculturists. The grain and other produce brought to market from a greater distance than above mentioned by the Dutch are taken to reduce the expenses of the journey, when they go thither to procure such articles as their farms do not afford. Government might certainly do much to encourage the growth of articles that would bear the expense of transport, without incurring any considerable expense.

The tea and coffee plants and the olive-tree are all to be found either in the government-garden or in those of individuals at Cape Town. There can be no doubt that these are well adapted to the climate and soil of

various parts of the colony, more particularly the first and last mentioned. Now, if a small stock of these plants were kept for distribution in the government-garden, and a notice published in the newspapers offering them at certain moderate prices to the farmers, accompanied with a few simple instructions in Dutch and English—which might easily be done,—I have no hesitation in saying that many, in all parts of the colony, would gladly avail themselves of the facility thus offered.

From the economical habits of the Dutch, they would cheerfully bestow any labour in the cultivation of an article which would introduce the most trifling saving in their housekeeping. Tea is a favourite luxury with them, and they drink it at all hours of the day, when they are able to afford it; were the price more moderate, the consumption would be immensely increased. I have often talked on this subject with my Dutch neighbours, but found an idea prevalent among them that the culture of tea was contrary to law. The East India Company, not contented with the exorbitant prices they demand for their inferior

teas at the Cape, have lately even contested the right of the colonists to re-import the article from England; but their interest in a matter of such small consequence deserves but little consideration, in comparison with its great importance to a settlement like the Cape, which has so many natural disadvantages to contend with.

Of late years silk-worms have been introduced at Cape Town; and it is expected that the production of silk in so favourable a climate will afford a valuable source of employment, and, in time, supply the place of the cultivation of the vine, which has for several years, as I have already observed, been in a declining state. The scarcity of labour in the interior of the colony will, however, for a long period, prevent the colonists from availing themselves of this branch of industry; for the management of silk-worms requires both much manual labour and a minute attention, which the farmers of the interior cannot well spare from their other occupations.

On account of the general scarcity of water in the interior, the Government has found it necessary to allot the land to the farmers in

large quantities, in order that it might all be occupied; few of the places thus granted consisting of less than four thousand acres. This ample extent of pasturage, in a country where the cattle require no winter provision, affords the colonists great advantages, as stock-farmers.

In the present state of the population, the rearing of cattle, from the little labour required in herding and the cheapness of their transport, must necessarily be the most profitable pursuit. It is, in fact, from their stock that the agriculturists throughout the colony derive their chief profits.

Near the coast, a farm of four thousand acres will maintain from two to four hundred head of horned cattle, besides a few sheep and horses, and in some cases still more. The small number of cattle the pasture lands in this country will support, in proportion to their extent, is principally owing to the heat and dryness of the summer, during which the grass in most parts of the colony loses its nutriment, or is almost entirely burnt up. Yet, notwithstanding the deterioration of the pasture, Nature has furnished a variety of shrubs and succulent

plants in the most arid tracts in the interior, which afford great nourishment to the flocks during the driest seasons.

A stranger, in travelling through the most uninviting parts of the colony, where during the summer scarcely a blade of grass is to be seen, is often surprised at the fat and thriving appearance of the herds of cattle and sheep, and is at a loss to conceive how they obtain their sustenance, until he sees them browsing on the tender twigs and leaves of the bushes which in these arid tracts often cover the surface of the ground, while they neglect the withered tufts of grass which are scattered here and there around their roots.

Were we to judge by the appearance of the herbage, we should often be deceived as to the capability of the land for supporting or fattening cattle; for this depends much more on the quality than the quantity of grass or nutritive shrubs.

There are three gradations of quality into which the grasses of the country are usually divided—sweet, sour, and mixed; and a new settler would do well, before he fixes on any

spot in the way of purchase or otherwise, to ascertain from the experienced Dutch colonists to which of these general divisions the land may belong; for he will find that his previous knowledge of the European grasses will be of little use to him in this colony. Very few British settlers ever attain to the sagacity of the natives in judging of this most important consideration; for there are various kinds of sweet, sour, and mixed grasses, so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to lay down any general rule for their guidance.

One observation, however, I have always found to hold good,—that the quality of the same grasses, as well as the prevalence of the different kinds, is entirely dependant on the degree of fertility or poverty of the soils on which they grow; and if the colonist can obtain a correct knowledge of the latter particular, he cannot mistake much as to the former.

Excepting the more arid tracts of the interior, for the purposes of stock-farming it is always better to select a dry *sweet* place, in preference to a verdant spot where the pasture is *sour*. The pasture of mountain tracts is always sour,

and the land poor. The valleys at their base are of the intermediate kind in grass and soil; and the country towards the coast improves in these qualities. The deep valleys skirting the banks of the rivers in these less hilly parts, and a strip of country varying in breadth according to other circumstances, close along the sea-coast, are generally sweet.

It is difficult in this colony to find situations equally adapted for pasturage and cultivation; for in the greater portion of the best grazing districts the soil is so dry, and springs are so scarce, that the inhabitants can hardly obtain grain enough from their farms in dry seasons for their necessary consumption. In many cases they cannot even procure vegetables for their tables unless they purchase them of their more fortunate neighbours. This will not suit our European habits; and on this account I should recommend British settlers to establish themselves where they can obtain a moderate share of the different benefits as to pasturage and cultivation, and in this respect the country along the base of the mountains unites most advantages. I would further caution them

against overstocking their land; for certain tracts, more particularly in the districts near the Cape, are unhealthy for cattle, on account of the animals eating pernicious plants, which their instinct enables them to avoid when they have plenty of other pasturage.

The management of the milch cows is somewhat peculiar in this country. The cattle are a mixed breed, between the original African race and the European; and few of the cows will give their milk without allowing their calves to suck for some time. But as all the calves are reared to increase the stock, no inconvenience is felt from this circumstance.

An oblong enclosure is made with strong poles fixed in the ground, with a pen at one end to confine the calves until they are wanted. Into this pen the calves are driven before the cows come home from grazing in the evening. The cattle being never housed, become excessively wild; and to catch and tie a young cow to her post in the "kraal," is a matter of no small difficulty, and sometimes not free from danger. On the first attempt to take hold of the calf in the field, the enraged cow generally

runs furiously at the person who presumes to interfere in her family concerns, when he must take care to get out of her way with all convenient speed, or abide the consequences of a disagreeable collision with her horns.

If he can succeed in catching up the calf in his arms, he is then safe from injury, on account of his burthen; which he may forthwith proceed to deposit in the pen, unmindful of the menacing gestures of the angry mother. But the worst part of his task still remains to be achieved — to secure the cow; and this is as much as two or three people generally can manage. The moment the animal perceives that an attempt is made to convey a noose round her horns by means of a long stick, and the attempt fails, she becomes so impatient and shy that it is necessary to change the point of attack. One of the people now endeavours, by means of the stick, to get the noose round her hind leg when she lifts her foot from the ground, which operation requires much dexterity.

As soon as this end is effected, the thong used for the purpose is drawn tight by the assistants, and secured round one of the poles of the

"kraal;" when the animal becomes perfectly furious, bellowing, kicking, and plunging. Woe be to him that comes within the length of her tether! for, with inflamed eyes and tongue lolled out, she runs indiscriminately at everything that comes within her reach. But, taking advantage of her turnings, the people, who are secure from her rage behind the poles of the "kraal," gradually tighten the thong and confine her efforts until her leg is drawn up close to the pole, and they can venture to approach her head and fasten to her horns another thong, which is then conveyed round a pole on the opposite side of the "kraal." One thong is then slackened and the other tightened until the cow's head is secured to her post, where she is allowed to fume and bellow till she is tired and becomes more manageable. At the time of milking, a boy stands at the door of the pen, and lets the calves out as they are wanted, for they soon learn to answer to their names. After allowing the calf to suck for a few minutes, they proceed to milk all they can get from the cow, which generally retains enough for her young.

The quantity of milk the cows yield is in this part of the colony very inconsiderable. Twenty cows seldom give more than from twenty-four to thirty-six quarts at a milking; but it is generally very rich in quality.

It is remarkable, notwithstanding the intractability of the other cattle, that the bulls have none of the ferocity of those in England.

The profits of stock in this country are very great, for the small capital required in the first instance. From the mildness of the climate, the cattle require no provision to be made for their support in winter; and the only care they need is to bring them home at night to protect them from the hyænas, these animals never committing depredations in the day-time.

The price of cows varies according to the breed from 1*l.* 4*s.* to 2*l.* 5*s.* per head, and oxen from 1*l.* 18*s.* to 2*l.* 13*s.* On a good cattle-farm, and with proper management, from seventy to eighty calves may be expected as the yearly produce of a hundred cows, exclusive of what may be gained by the butter, which fetches from $4\frac{1}{2}$*d.* to $6\frac{3}{4}$*d.* per pound at the different markets. Twelve quarts of milk generally yield

about a pound of butter. The making of cheese is understood by very few of the Dutch, and it in consequence bears a higher value in proportion to butter than in England, the most common kinds selling for nearly the same per pound. There can be no doubt that, if cheese could be produced of a superior quality, it would fetch a very high price as an article of export to the Mauritius and India. To avoid tedious details, which would be uninteresting to the majority of persons, I merely mention a few simple facts, leaving the reader to make his own calculations if he thinks it worth his while.

The breeding of horses for the Cape Town market is a great source of profit to the farmers of the district of Swellendam, who have much improved the race by the introduction of English stallions: but here, as in the other parts of the colony, they are subject to a disease which carries off great numbers annually, and for which as yet, I believe, no effectual remedy has been found. This malady makes its appearance towards the latter end of summer, and continues until winter. In some few

places the animals are, however, exempted from it; and the mortality is in all places much diminished by keeping them in a close stable during the sickly season.

The disease commences with a running at the nose or foaming at the mouth; but in many cases the horses die without either of these symptoms. Various theories have been started to account for this singular malady; and even its nature is disputed among the medical people, though most of them conceive it to begin with inflammation of the lungs, if it be not altogether of a pulmonary nature. When the faculty disagree, and *post mortem* examinations fail in giving us any certain knowledge of a matter of so much importance to the farmer, an extended observation of the circumstances attending the disease may throw some light on the subject. In the first place, as I have already mentioned, the animals on some spots are exempted from it, and these situations are either on the summit of the mountains, or close to the coast: but the pasture of these places is generally of a diametrically opposite character —the one being very poor, and the other very

nutritive. The malady cannot, therefore, be occasioned by the grass. As far as I have had an opportunity of observing, this disease does not occur on very high and equal elevations.

It may be asked, how it happens that all parts of the coast are not free from it. This brings me to what I conceive to be the true solution of the question, viz. that the disease is simply inflammation of some kind or other, occasioned by sudden changes of temperature. I have uniformly remarked, that the places along the coast where the horses are exempt from it are always flat; which preserves them from the sudden alternations of heat and cold in passing from hills to deep valleys while they are grazing at large through the day. The season of the year at which the disease makes its appearance, when the nights are beginning to grow cold, and the valleys during the night and morning are filled with chilling fogs, seems further to confirm my theory. Notwithstanding the general uniformity in the temperature of the air in this country, many of the diseases of the inhabitants are occasioned by the same

transitions from heat to cold, arising from the inequalities of its surface.

I have dwelt longer on this subject, in consequence of the increasing importance of the trade in horses, which have for some time been exported in considerable numbers to the East Indies for the service of the cavalry, and the peculiar adaptation of the colony in general, and the district of Swellendam in particular, for this kind of stock.

With the exception of this malady, the horses of the colony are peculiarly healthy, and are capable of supporting great hardship and fatigue on very poor fare. No people, however, are more ignorant of the proper mode of training them, or preserving and perfecting these most valuable qualities, than the Dutch colonists. The animals are backed too early, and treated with indiscriminate harshness and cruelty: the consequence is, that they either lose their spirit and become hollow in the back, or grow vicious and unmanageable.

When a young horse is to be broken in, he is tied by the neck to a tame one. Two heavy

fellows mount them, and flog the poor animal unmercifully with their "shamboeks" until he goes forward, and continue this brutal treatment until he is docile enough to be ridden alone. The price of horses in this district varies much according to the breed.

Breeding mares* cost from 2*l.* 5*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* a head, and riding horses from 7*l.* 10*s.* to 15*l.* and upwards. Very high prices have been given for English stallions by some of the farmers. I have known of 300*l.* to 400*l.* being paid for some of those imported by the governor; but it must be remembered that the agriculturists generally expected certain favours in return, in the shape of grants of land, &c.

The Cape large-tailed sheep are well known to be of a very inferior kind, being small-bodied, and having hair instead of wool. Like the original breed of cattle, they have long legs, and go over a great deal of ground in grazing; which circumstance makes them well fitted for the scanty pasturage of the interior.

* To ride mares in this country is considered disgraceful; not on the score of humanity, but as being a mark of poverty, and only fit for a Hottentot or slave.

It is a common notion in England that the quality of the wool, or rather hair, is to be attributed to the climate or the nature of the pasture; whereas these sheep are an original race, little improved by crossing with other kinds. This is one of those easy ways by which people who do not think account for what they do not understand. If this prejudice should be once entertained by the colonists, it will have a direct tendency to prevent attempts at improvement by lessening their hopes of success.

We find that the wools of Australia, a similar climate, have, under the management of men of intelligence and capital, attained a great degree of fineness: and this fact, which should be an argument for the practicability of improvement in the wools of the Cape, has been unfairly urged against it, without considering the different circumstances of the two colonies.

Australia has had immense advantages over the Cape in this respect. Men of large capital have settled there as sheep-farmers, who have imported the best breeds from Europe, and have had an almost unlimited command of cheap labour. It may farther be remarked,

that in a country where the number of the sheep is limited, it is a much easier matter to improve them. It is only within these few years that the attention of the Cape sheep-farmers has been turned to this important object; and enough has already been effected by several individuals to show that the wools are susceptible of *some* improvement, but to what extent it may be carried they have not yet had time to determine. Suffice it to say, that a considerable quantity of wool has been exported at low prices; and it would be absurd, in the present state of the matter, to assert that the improvement may not be progressively continued.

Judging from the numerous flocks of healthy and thriving sheep of the common breed throughout the colony, and the dryness of the country, there cannot exist the smallest doubt that the colony is peculiarly adapted to the rearing of this kind of stock; and it is a matter of the utmost importance to its interests generally, and more particularly to the more remote parts of it, that, by improving the wool, the inhabitants may be furnished with a valuable

article of exportation to the mother-country. Unless some exportable produce of this kind be found, the stock-farmers of the interior must ultimately sink into a state but little removed from barbarism, and be compelled to subsist by their flocks and to clothe themselves in their skins.

Where the bulk of the population are producers, the consumption cannot keep pace with production. This is already beginning to be felt by the farmers of the interior in the diminished request for sheep and cattle, from the great increase of stock in the parts of the colony near Cape Town. Of late years, indeed, there has been some call for fat cattle, which are salted for exportation to the Mauritius: but what are the sheep-farmers of the interior to do when their flocks have increased beyond the demand? They must improve their wools, or they will in time sink to a level with the Kaffres.

It is not to be supposed that Government, in these enlightened times, could be so illiberal as to discountenance manufactures in this more than in her other colonies; but something more is

required. Manufactures should be encouraged, particularly where the colonists are not able to buy the articles of the mother-country. If this can be done at the Cape, a population of consumers will be created to supply the wants of the stock-farmers and receive their produce in exchange.

Were manufactures of coarse woollens, for instance, established, articles might be produced from the most inferior wools of the colony, which would find a ready sale at low prices, not only in all parts of the colony, but among the Kaffres and other barbarous tribes in the interior of Africa, in exchange for ivory and skins. By opening a commercial communication between the different native races, we should give them the strongest interest to maintain peaceful habits among themselves, as well as amicable dispositions towards the colony.

CHAPTER VII.

Novel Mode of Life.—Uniformity of the Dutch Character.—Mode of accounting for it.—Oppressive Government at the Cape.—Dutch Cunning and Roguery.—Friendly Offerings.—Female Influence.—Education of Children.—Early Vices.—African Scenery described.—A Monster of Obesity.—Melancholy Emblems.—A Ludicrous Scene.—Indifference to Death.—Religious Notions.—Passion of Love.—Marriage a matter of convenience.—Matrimonial Expedition.—National Pride of the Scotch.—Prejudices and Vices.—Hottentot Oppression.—A Love Affair.—Trial for Murder.

As may be supposed, amid scenes of such novelty and attraction to a young mind, many weeks elapsed before I felt much disposed to apply myself to any serious occupation. My brother, whose zest for the amusements of the country was renewed from sympathy, and not a little from the pleasure of showing his own proficiency in the language and manners of the

colony, cordially entered into my feelings, and scarcely a day passed that we did not ride out on some shooting excursion among the hills, or to visit our Dutch neighbours, who seemed as much amused with my un-African appearance as I was with their ultra-boorism.

I was much struck on these occasions with the singular uniformity of character that pervades the whole Dutch population of the country: they seem, indeed, to be all fashioned after one model; and few individual peculiarities are to be found in one character that may not be observed in a greater or smaller degree in another. This appears the more remarkable when we consider how thinly the inhabitants are scattered over the colony: but it must be recollected, that they are all intimately connected by intermarriage, and keep up a constant intercourse, employing much of their leisure time in riding out, and visiting each other.

Other circumstances are, however, necessary to account satisfactorily for so striking a feature in South African society. When we find a uniformity of character so general in the inhabitants of a country, we may infer from

thence the existence of some cause operating as universally. This may generally be found in the nature of the government under which they have lived. That of the Cape, at the time I allude to (1819--20), was oppressive in its original constitution, and still more so in its details; and to this we may attribute the deceitful, servile, and suspicious disposition of the colonists. Notwithstanding the intimate familiarity which subsisted among them, they were afraid to open their mouths on any subject connected in the most distant way with local politics, in the fear of their remarks being carried to the "Landdrost," or petty viceroy of the district. This officer held all the ministerial and judicial power in the part of the country where he presided. As might be expected, a character thus formed must soon extend itself to their transactions and general intercourse with their neighbours.

The Cape-Dutch character also presents a strange mixture of simplicity and petty roguery —bluntness and servility. "Seimmigheid," or cunning, is accounted among them the highest accomplishment and the most undoubted proof

of talent; and when they can obtain any petty advantage over a neighbour in a bargain, they do not scruple to boast of it in the most open manner, and rise in their own and their neighbours' estimation in proportion to their adroitness. No people can trick or lie with more apparent sincerity; their phlegmatic insensibility to shame and external simplicity of demeanour alike contributing to their success. Whenever they sell the most trifling article at the most exorbitant price, they try to persuade you that nothing but their personal friendship could induce them to part with it on such moderate terms. With all this cunning, there is a great want of talent and variety in the tricks they play off upon strangers; so that if a person can bring himself to the ungenerous conclusion that they are all rogues, he need not be often deceived by them.

We had many amusing instances of the petty cunning of the Dutch at Groot Vaders Bosch. Scarcely a day passed but some slave or Hottentot brought an epistle to my brother from one of the neighbouring "frows" or "boers," accompanied by some present of wild flowers,

or, perhaps, half a dozen of eggs; in return for which they humbly requested him to send some article by the bearer, which they well knew was five or six times the value of their "present," as they called it. At one time they wanted a few bottles of vinegar; at another, their "vriendlyk versack"* was, that he would send them a handkerchief of a pretty colour, or some tea and sugar. When they were successful in this advantageous interchange of friendship, they never failed to renew their applications as soon as an opportunity occurred.

The Dutch colonists, however, never felt thankful to my brother for his good-nature in complying with their "friendly requests;" but laughed at the simplicity of the "dom Engelsman," or stupid Englishmen, as they generally denominate our countrymen. If he ever happened to lend them anything, it was generally in vain to expect that it would be returned. There are few men without some kind of cant to answer their purposes—that of our Dutch neighbours was friendship. All their letters begin with "Good friend," and the word is never out of

* Friendly request.

their mouths when they have any particular interest to serve by it.

Notwithstanding the Dutch are extremely ignorant, they are minute observers of natural objects, and exhibit much intelligence on subjects connected with their peculiar mode of life. Though far from being acute, they possess in a high degree a certain solidity of understanding, joined to a patient perseverance, which fits them well for conquering difficulties and improving their circumstances under disadvantages which would discourage people of a more lively and sanguine temperament. No profit is too trifling to be an object of their cupidity, and they spare no pains to obtain it.

The men are almost universally under a slavish subjection to their wives, and dare not make any arrangement with regard to their common property without the consent of the ladies. If a man makes a good bargain according to his wife's judgment, it is all well; but if otherwise, it is instantly annulled, her sanction being always considered indispensable to its completion. If the men are avaricious, the women are doubly so.

The early education of the children is well calculated to create covetous dispositions. As soon as a child is born, two or three breeding cows, or a certain number of sheep, are set apart to form his future stock when he quits the paternal roof. These cattle have a particular mark affixed to distinguish them; and as the child grows up, he is encouraged in making bargains with other boys, and is praised when he gains an advantage over any of them in his dealings. I have often heard a father boasting that his boy was so clever, that "he had cheated a grown-up man."

The children are allowed to play with the young slaves and Hottentots, and are never checked for tyrannizing over them: they are also encouraged in the accomplishment of lying, which seems to be considered necessary to their future success in life. So little do the Dutch think this a vice, that nothing is more common than to give each other the lie direct when they doubt any statement in the course of conversation: this is always taken in good part, the imputation being considered somewhat in the light of a compliment.

Among the neighbours whom we visited in the course of our rides in the vicinity of Groot Vaders Bosch was an old man of the name of Botha. His house stood in a plain, surrounded on all sides by high hills; and in front, towards the mountains, a scene met the eye which for wild and savage magnificence could hardly be exceeded in nature. A river pent up among the mountains had in the lapse of ages worn a perpendicular chasm through the centre of a naked precipice several hundred feet in height. The stream being obstructed in its course by a ledge of rocks at the mouth of this superb portal, formed a pool, which extended some hundred yards between the perpendicular sides of the chasm, overhung by trees and shrubs which had taken root in the crevices of the rocks; but, by climbing along the projecting shelves, access could with difficulty be gained to the source of the river, in a deep and woody amphitheatre among the mountains. The sides of this valley are so high and steep, that the only way the valuable timber it contains can be got out is, by rolling the logs into the bed of the stream, where they remain until they are floated out

when the river is swelled into a torrent after heavy rains.

Never was a man less alive to the enjoyment of such scenery than Martinus Botha; nor could he conceive what pleasure we experienced in its contemplation. All that he knew or cared for was, that he had a constant run of water for his mill; but whether it came from a romantic chasm, or from a muddy lake, was to him a matter of the greatest indifference. I am rather inclined to think that he had a secret suspicion that he himself was the object of my frequent visits to his abode. He was one of those monsters of obesity who are so often to be seen in this colony, and of whose appearance we can form but a faint conception from any common instance of the kind in England. He was literally a martyr to corpulence, his prodigious powers of digestion having nearly destroyed the exercise of his mental faculties.

For several years Martinus Botha had not been able to lie down in his bed for fear of suffocation, and the only way he could get any sleep was by leaning his head on the table before him: in this manner he could procure

a little rest, which was only for a few minutes at a time. It is difficult to describe his person, for shape he had hardly any. A huge bag of fat hung below his chin, and the flesh of his ankles hung down till it touched his shoes. Notwithstanding his enormous size, he was a great *gourmand,* and thought little of devouring several pounds of mutton at a meal, after which he could sometimes drink a bottle of brandy without being affected by it. He was at this period beginning to feel some alarm at his increasing dimensions, and took from time to time a journey in his waggon to Swellendam to consult the medical practitioner on his case. On these occasions, he would call on his way at Groot Vaders Bosch; but the doctor, who had killed many men without intending it, could not succeed by any means in checking the growth of his unwieldy patient, who began to fancy that he was afflicted with dropsy; and he was confirmed in the idea by the opinions of his family and neighbours.

In a country where it is found most convenient to bury the dead as speedily as possible, it is common for elderly people to keep a coffin

in their houses ready for their own use, or to lend to any of their neighbours who may chance to die before them. In travelling through this part of the colony, if you cast your eyes upwards in a "boer's" house, this rather melancholy object may be often seen lying across the beams; and so far from exciting any unpleasant feelings, it has often been pointed out to me by the old farmers with great self-complacency, as a proof of their good management in being beforehand with time.

Our bulky friend arrived one day at Groot Vaders Bosch in his waggon, accompanied by two of his sons. After sitting for some time and drinking a glass of brandy, he informed us that he had come to get a coffin made for his own use, as he had the "water," (dropsy,) and did not expect to live long, and had moreover grown to such a size that none of his neighbours had any large enough to hold him. "That 's true, father, what you say," replied one of the young men, without altering a muscle of his countenance.

My brother had two carpenters in an adjoining outhouse employed in making up vari-

ous articles of furniture for sale among the farmers; and to their workshop I accompanied our visiter. Jamie Learmouth, a little sly drunken body, was hard at work at his bench, and singing one of our favourite Scotch songs, in a manner that showed he was more occupied with the words and the recollections to which they gave rise than the modulation of his notes. He had just come to the words of Burns—

> "We twa hae paidled in the burn
> When simmer days were fine,"

when we entered his shop.

Observing the lusty customer who darkened his door, Jamie quitted his plane, and addressed him, with a sly twinkle, in a jargon in which Dutch and broad Scotch were curiously intermingled. "Goe'n dag, Mynheer Botha; hoo faar you the day?"—"I come," answered Botha in his own language, "to have a coffin made." —"I can shune do that for ye," replied Jamie; "but is 't for yersel'?"—"Yes, certainly." —"Faith, ye 'll need a gude big ane," said the carpenter; "but if ye 'll joost lay yersel' oot on the bed there, I 'll shune tak yer measure."

Jamie cast a sly look at me as he made this proposal; for he knew it was easier said than done. However, with the assistance of his sons, the old farmer, who had seated himself on the side of the bed, was gradually lowered down on his back, to the great danger of the conscious bedstead, which uttered sundry discontented creaks at the unusual weight imposed on it, which seemed to excite Jamie's fears not a little for his hastily-constructed couch.

Poor Botha's sufferings in this position were so great, that if the carpenter had not completed his measurements with expedition, he must infallibly have died of suffocation on the spot. His respiration ceased almost entirely as long as he lay in a horizontal position; and it was not until he was again raised up that the air pent up in his lungs found a passage, when it rushed out like the blowing of a porpoise when he comes to the surface of the water.

When Martinus could collect his thoughts, he again addressed the workman. "Hear, James, you must make my coffin roomy enough, for I 'll swell up very much when I am dead." While he was retiring to his wag-

gon, his son took Jamie by the arm and begged him to make the coffin close in the joints; "for," he added, "father will perhaps *run out* after he is dead." The perfect apathy and *sang-froid* with which these serious arrangements were made, were highly characteristic of the people.

This kind of indifference to death is generally to be observed among ignorant people: but, in addition to their extreme ignorance on all subjects unconnected with their peculiar mode of life, the Dutch colonists entertain rather extravagant notions of the privileges of Christians, and are in general firmly persuaded that all who have been sprinkled with a little water go to Heaven when they die, as a matter of course. One thing, however, puzzles them sadly—how the baptized Hottentots and slaves are to be disposed of after death; for they think it quite impossible that an order of beings whom they are accustomed to regard with such contempt should be placed on an equality with themselves.

The more enlightened among them are considerably relieved from their perplexity by the passage of Scripture which tells us that there

are many mansions in the kingdom of Heaven, in which case they trust that the black and white Christians will be kept separate.

The Dutch settlers, if they are without many of the enjoyments of a more refined state of existence, are in a great measure exempted from its passions and sufferings. Love—that passion to which in the more refined acceptation of the word we owe some of our most generous and delightful sensations—is almost an entire stranger to their breasts. This passion cannot exist without a certain degree of sensibility of constitution and purity of manners; but these concomitant circumstances are not to be found in the colony at the Cape. Marriage is considered in the light of a matter of convenience, or a merely mercantile transaction; and matrimonial alliances are proposed and broken off again as it may suit the views of the parties, without occasioning any pain or disagreement on either side.

In the course of my antelope shooting excursions towards the sea-coast, I had often stopped at the house of a poor farmer, who sometimes accompanied me with his long

gun. One day, on entering his dwelling, I found him looking more serious than usual, and was surprised at not finding his wife sitting with her teapot before her at her little table, which a Dutchwoman never quits except during sickness. "How fares your frow?" I inquired in the Cape-Dutch dialect. "She is dead," answered Jan Niewkerk, shrugging his shoulders and heaving a sigh which seemed to come as much from his stomach as from his heart. "Ya, Mynheer M——, she has been dead for two weeks," he resumed, holding up two fingers of his right hand to assist my comprehension; "and left me here with a whole houseful of young children." Then, holding up two fingers again, "Two fine riding-horses too are dead. Oh! yea, ya! so it always goes in the world: one day you have a thing, and another day it is gone; and you have all your trouble for nothing."

About a week afterwards Jan Niewkerk was seen galloping along the valley towards our house; and, as he flung the bridle over his horse's head, and stalked into the hall where we were sitting, I observed that he was dressed

out in his best clothes, consisting of a new velveteen jacket and trousers with mother-of-pearl buttons, and a broad-brimmed white hat, with a pipe stuck through the band.

His gloomy manner had disappeared, and he looked as fresh as if he was bound on his first matrimonial expedition. After the first salutations, he became exceedingly loquacious, and said to us, "One frow is dead, I 'm now looking for another; I've been to ask two, but they won't have me; now I don't know where I 'll try next: perhaps, Mynheer M——," addressing my brother, "can give me some advice?" "What do you think of the young widow La Rue?" answered my brother: "won't she suit you?"—"O ya, that 's true, Mynheer; she had slipped clean out of my mind; but it is not too late yet."—"That is just as you ride," answered my brother; "for she intended to start for the Cape this morning in her waggon, and if you would catch her you have not much time to lose."—"Then I cannot stay any longer," quoth Niewkerk, jumping on his feet and shaking hands with us; and in a minute he was in his saddle and off as fast as he came.

We saw no more of him till the sun was sinking behind the mountains, when he returned, fatigued and somewhat dejected. While he was taking the saddle from his jaded beast, he said to us, "It was too late; the widow was off in her waggon, and I followed her as far as the Buffel Jaagt's river; but my horse was tired, and I was sorry for him, and so I have come back again to Mynheer M——." Notwithstanding this first disappointment, our friend Niewkerk persevered, and as "every Jockie has his Jennie," according to the Scotch proverb, he soon matched himself to his taste; and, for aught I know to the contrary, is still living very contentedly with his new wife and a fresh brood of young Africans, eating fat messes and hunting antelopes and ostriches, as formerly.

It is probably for the same reason that they think little of death in their own cases, that the Dutch seem to have so little feeling for others. They do not scruple to tell a sick person that they think he will die, or to discuss his case before him without the smallest reserve, or regarding the effect their conversation might have on the patient. At the same time,

they are by no means remiss in affording every necessary assistance in their power.

It is particularly amusing to observe the manners of different countries and classes contrasted with each other, and, as it were, brought into actual contact—each person jealously contending for the superiority of his own particular customs and character.

The Scotch—particularly the lower orders of them—have a large share of national pride and self-conceit; but though, like the thistle of their country, their prejudices are stiff and unbending, they do not, like those of the English, show themselves in a manner to give offence to foreigners, unless they receive a direct insult. When this is the case, no people feel the outrage more keenly.

We had several of the labourers on the farm whom my brother had brought out from Scotland, (and some of them were excellent farm-servants,) who, imbued with the natural prejudices in favour of their own mode of agriculture, and intent on showing its superiority over that of the Dutch by the large crops they expected to raise, were extremely mortified by the ridicule

of our neighbours when they would not take their advice. They often found out their errors in this respect when it was too late to save their pride; and a snappish animosity grew up between the new and the old colonists, half in earnest, half in joke. As generally happens in such cases, the prejudices and peculiarities of each were rendered more obstinate and intractable.

Unfortunately for our countrymen, their vices were of that description which usually attract most attention; and gave rise to great scandal among the Dutch, who, demoralized as they generally are to a certain extent, are strict observers of decorum in matters which are likely to affect their reputation, according to the false and perverted standard of morality established among them. While the Dutch reproached our countrymen,—who made no secret of their partiality to the Hottentot women, and occasionally sat up for half the night drinking, and giving way to those wild freaks which their extravagant animal spirits suggested,—they themselves were, to a still greater extent, and with less excuse for their conduct, guilty

of the same improprieties; but, from the higher grade they held in society as to external circumstances, they felt the necessity and had the power of concealing them more effectually.

Though extreme poverty often leads men to the commission of the most atrocious offences, I believe, if we can divest ourselves of our prejudices, we shall find that the vices of the different grades in society are more equally balanced than many people are inclined to imagine. It is thus, that while certain among the great in our own country are habitually indulging in every luxury of the table even to excess, they can moralize and descant on the occasional though coarse excesses of the poor and ignorant, without considering that their knowledge of such vices is principally owing to the different mode of life of the lower orders. As long as the Dutch colonists keep such irregularities out of sight, they may lie, cheat, or commit murder, without materially suffering in the estimation of their neighbours.

A glaring instance of depravity occurred at the village of Swellendam during my residence in the neighbourhood, which shows in a strong

light the oppressions to which a despised class are subjected from their more powerful superiors. The daughter of an inhabitant who held a very respectable situation in that village had been discovered by her father, a Dutchman, to have formed a very intimate attachment to a Hottentot man in his service. The culprit was immediately sent, together with a private note explaining the affair, to the Landdrost, or magistrate, who ordered him to receive a severe flogging in the prison. After undergoing this punishment, the father preferred taking the Hottentot again into his family, rather than lose his future services.

Some months afterwards, a party of hunters, in returning home, were attracted to a particular spot by one of the dogs scraping up the ground, and discovered the remains of an infant which had been buried near the surface. The circumstance having reached the ears of the Landdrost, an inquiry was immediately set on foot, and the daughter of the Dutchman already mentioned was lodged in prison on suspicion. An English surgeon, who had lately settled in the village, had attended the lady in question,

but, on finding her actual condition, declined continuing his visits. The Hottentot, when examined, as is usual with his nation on such occasions, told everything without equivocation. He stated that the Dutch lady had one day called him up into the loft of the house, showed him a bundle and told him to bury it. He asked what was in it, and she said it was his child: he therefore took the parcel, and buried it where it was found by the hunters.

In consequence of the facts elicited, both the lady and her paramour were sent to Cape Town to stand their trial for child-murder. The former was found guilty of the concealment of the birth by the court of justice, and sentenced to a few months imprisonment, there not being sufficient evidence to convict her of murder. The unfortunate Hottentot, who had acted with the most perfect candour, was at the same time sentenced to confinement in Roben Island for (I believe) fourteen years.

During the whole period of this female's imprisonment she was visited by her acquaintances, who pretended not to believe the circumstances on which even the old Dutch court of

justice (which, fortunately for the colony, has since been abolished) could not help convicting her. When the time of her imprisonment had expired, she was again received into society as if nothing had happened, and has since been married to a Scotch labourer, who was tempted by her money.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dutch Manners.—Indolence of the Women.—Comparison between the Savage and the Civilized Man.—Characteristics of the Dutch at the Cape.—Remarks on the Condition of Slaves.—Punishment of disobedient Servants.—On the Repression of Crime in South Africa.—Inefficiency of the new Slave Laws.—Character of a Nation.—Progress of Government.—Roman Conquests.—Modern Prejudices.—Slaves and Serfs.—Negro Oppression.—Hints on the Emancipation of the Slaves.—Plan for ameliorating their Condition.

Of all people I have ever seen, the Cape-Dutch are the coarsest and least polished in their manners. The conversation of both sexes is marked by an almost total absence of common decency: the most disgusting oaths are used on all occasions by the men; and the women do not even feel ashamed to talk on the most indelicate subjects, hardly condescending to use any circumlocution. In this respect, indeed, they are even less refined than the

Hottentots. Wherever they have had much intercourse with the English, however, a gradual improvement is observable. The females, though often handsome when very young, are from this coarseness of manners exceedingly distasteful to the English, and few even of the lower classes of our countrymen can bring themselves to marry into a Dutch family. The moment a Dutchwoman enters into the conjugal state, she takes her seat by a little table in the hall, from which she never stirs if she can help it; and they often laugh at the folly of the Englishwomen, in going about the house to attend to their domestic concerns, when they might have everything done by calling to their servants, without quitting their places. When the Dutch ladies marry, they become exceedingly torpid and phlegmatic in their manners and habits, dirty and slovenly in their dress; and, from their cold constitution and freedom from care, like the men, they generally at an early age grow to an unwieldy size.

If we observe mankind in their progressive stages of improvement, from the untutored savage to the civilized being man, we shall

find that the manners of these opposite extremes more nearly resemble each other in externals than we might at first be led to imagine.

The savage, in his intercourse with his fellows, is generally kind and benevolent, and possesses a degree of natural politeness and refinement for which we may look in vain in the intermediate barbarous stages, when they have made some advances in industry and the arts of life. The equality of condition that prevails among savages as to wealth, and the common dangers they are constantly exposed to from their neighbouring tribes, promote a friendly and unceremonious intercourse between them, and soften down those asperities of character which constitute so large a portion of the unhappiness arising from envy and conflicting interests in the more advanced state of society. Depending on their flocks and the chase for their subsistence, and holding their lands in common, they are freed from a hundred sources of contention, and are forced to consider the good of the individual inseparable from that of the community.

As population increases, men are compelled

to have recourse to agriculture as a further means of support, and lands are appropriated by individuals: new and more complicated interests arise, which, being little understood, occasion distrust and disunion; until, ceasing to consider themselves as forming a part of a large family bound together by the common ties of interest, the affections of men gradually become restricted to their immediate relatives and the different members of their household.

The consequence of this state of things is, that from the intercourse of the different families in their more isolated situations becoming less frequent and cordial, the original simplicity and kindliness of feeling towards their neighbours in some measure yields to selfishness, and the manners of the people are infected with brutality or deceit, one or the other predominating as they may happen to be actuated by self-interest or other motives. Fortunately, however, for this stage, Government has gathered sufficient strength and consistency to restrain the savage and sordid passions of men within due bounds, so as to prevent them from being carried to such a height as to endanger

the fabric of society and occasion a dissolution of its connecting links.

Did not society contain the germs of further improvement through the influence of religious and civil institutions, and education disseminate among men clearer views of their mutual interest and dependance, the condition of savages, with all their dangers and privations, would be far happier than this intermediate state of existence.

But it is only in external usages that the manners of the savage and civilized man, as we are pleased to call the latter, may be said to resemble each other; for if we look below the surface, we shall perceive a wide difference. The savage is habitually sincere and unsuspicious—benevolent, and complaisant in his demeanour. His vices are those of violence under powerful excitement, not of depravity of heart. If he is cruel to his enemies, he is actuated by revenge unrestrained by discipline or laws. The civilized man, as civilization at present exists in the world, is sometimes but a compound of vicious and degrading propensities, restrained by laws and concealed under a smooth and

specious exterior. Interest and Reputation are the idols he worships: his politeness is but refined selfishness under the mask of sincerity.

If these reflections are just, we are irresistibly led to seek for purer and higher motives of action in the cultivation of a spiritual religion. To this source alone can we look for the highest perfectibility of civilization to which mankind can attain.

In making these remarks, to which I have been led by long and attentive observation of the characteristics of different races of men, in their several stages of moral and civil improvement, my principal object is to convey to the reader a more precise idea of the manners of the different inhabitants of the Cape colony, and the adjoining parts of the continent of Africa. These general characteristics of man in his progressive stages of civilization are, however, liable to considerable modifications in many instances, from intercourse with other portions of his species, in a more or less advanced state of improvement. The savage may thus become civilized in his manners,

which is, however, generally at the expense of his morals; and the civilized man may sometimes remain stationary, or relapse in some degree into barbarism, from the neglect of education or intercourse with a less improved race.

European society may be said, in its present state, to be made up of men in all the different stages of improvement, from absolute barbarism to civilization in the most extended signification of the term. What is the thoughtless and improvident labourer, or mechanic, who spends in two or three days the money which should last him for a week, and form a fund to support him in his old age, but an European savage—with the addition of many vices with which the savage is unacquainted?

The Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope afford an instance of a people partially relapsed into barbarism from want of education, and from their intercourse with a race of savages whom they have subjected and demoralized; retaining most of the vices of Europeans, with the cruelty of the slave-holder and savage. Had this nation constituted the sole population of the colony, and their govern-

ment been formed on more liberal principles, we should, in all probability, have found the colonists of the present day a very superior specimen of the rude and unpolished, but independent barbarian; with much of the honesty of the savage united to the industry and intelligence of the civilized being.

Nothing can exercise a more baneful influence on the character of men, more particularly of the uneducated, than the possession of unlimited power over other races whom they are in the habit of considering naturally inferior to themselves. Like neighbouring nations, men generally hate and despise in the greatest degree those whose characters or conditions approach nearest to their own.

The possession of slaves, and the subjection of the Hottentots, as I have already observed, have been the source of the greatest demoralization to all classes in this colony; and I have often remarked, that the contempt and hatred in which these unhappy classes are held by the colonists, whether Dutch or English, is always in exact proportion to the ignorance or poverty of their masters.

The condition of the slaves in our different colonies has of late become a subject of considerable interest, and, I believe, of much exaggeration, in England, as might be expected from the violent party spirit which has been enlisted on both sides of the question. What stronger argument can the abolitionists urge against slavery than its general injustice and cruelty? Does it add one iota to the strength of their reasoning, to prove that instances of glaring inhumanity are to be found among men entrusted with such a dangerous power over their dependants? Such instances can only operate against the individuals who perpetrate them, and should not be extended to the whole class of slave-holders.

It is sufficiently evident that an unjust and arbitrary system can only be supported by coercive measures. The same objections which are urged against the punishments inflicted on disobedient slaves, would be equally applicable to those inflicted on other servants in countries where there is a scarcity of labour. In European countries, where there is generally a superabundance of labourers, the disobedient servant is sufficiently punished by the employer, by

being dismissed from his service. In our colonies it is otherwise; for if a master should discharge his servant for a breach of the contract he enters into with him, he would only injure himself by the loss of his labour.

It is therefore a difficult matter, under such circumstances, to devise a mode of punishment unobjectionable in its nature with regard to the servant, which will not operate to the disadvantage of the master, and, in its secondary consequences, against the interest and morals of the servant himself. For this reason, at the Cape, it seldom happens that any crime except one of the most atrocious character is ever brought under the cognizance of the competent magistrates, unless it is committed in the immediate neighbourhood of the seat of magistracy:—for who will take the trouble of conveying the culprit fifty or eighty miles to the district prison, and with the certainty, if he be his servant (which is generally the case), of being deprived of his labour for a longer or shorter period, which circumstance might often be attended with great loss?

This observation is peculiary applicable to

South Africa, on account of the necessarily scattered state of the population in an arid and thinly-inhabited country, and is well deserving of the attention of its legislators.

From the natural causes already mentioned, the people of South Africa must ever, or at least for a very long period, remain widely dispersed over its surface; and unless the number as well as the powers of the local magistrates be very much augmented, crime must increase to an extent which will in time render the condition of the landholders intolerable. Different countries and states of society, it must be obvious, require different institutions and laws.

While on this subject, I cannot forbear extracting a passage from a private letter I have lately received from an intelligent friend residing at Grahamstown, to show how inapplicable the new slave-laws, established by an order in Council issued on the 3rd of February 1830, are to the Cape; and how inefficient the legal institutions are to repress crime, which has lately increased to an immense extent, particularly on the frontiers of the colony.

"Some portions of the new law," says the

writer, "are so inapplicable, that I fear much mischief will be the result. Read the Punishment Registry part, and say how a man, two hundred miles from a protector, with perhaps only one slave, is to act? How could ——, in the Anti-Slavery Reporter, on that Order, omit to notice the *impossibility* of complying with the law here? But I fancy the object of the anti-folks is to plague the slave-owners until they incline them to any terms. The industrious Hottentots are doing well; (they had lately been liberated from the species of slavery under which they laboured;) but as you know how few are so, you will not wonder at hearing that the majority live as vagabonds. At Graaf Reynet there were one hundred and twenty convict Hottentots, mostly found guilty of cattle stealing — here (at Grahamstown) about ninety — Somerset sixty — and so on. The worst is, that they come out of prison greater rogues than they went in. Of four sheep-stealers whom I got pardoned part of their sentence, three have come in again, two for house-breaking."

I confess I am at a loss to conceive how crime is to be effectually prevented in this colony,

among slaves and other servants (who rarely possess property of any kind) without some species of corporal chastisement; for it is obvious that a man can only be punished in his person or in his property. If he is without the latter, must he therefore escape with impunity? As I have already shown, imprisonment is ineffectual, as it only injures the master. It is, besides, scarcely any punishment to the coloured population of the colony, and generally returns them to society more accomplished malefactors than they were before.

There can be no doubt that the character of a nation is in some measure the result of its institutions and laws; but it is still more certain—and I believe I am supported by the history of all nations when I assert—that the laws and institutions of a people are rather the consequences than the causes of its national character.

Nations, like individuals, have their stages of infancy and maturity; and they must both in some degree be treated according to the developement of the reasoning faculties. But the first indications of intellect should be carefully observed, and cherished to the utmost by giving

scope to their energies and supplying the best motives of action.

It is certain that man in his natural and primitive state is free; but as families are for mutual protection united into small societies or tribes, the necessity of some government and laws is felt by all, to repress the violence which is characteristic of the infant state of nations, and which would endanger the internal peace of the community. As in civilized countries men appeal to the feelings and good sense of their peers against private injuries of which the law takes no cognizance, so in like manner the savage, in the outset of civil government, appeals to the united sense of his race for protection, and councils of the whole tribe or of certain divisions of it are formed, over which some individual more intelligent or influential than the others gains somewhat of the authority of a judge.

As judges owe their origin to internal dissensions, so do kings owe their origin to the external wars of the tribe. The power of the leader of an army is shortly transferred to civil matters, and his soldiers in time of war

soon become his subjects during peace. The first germs of despotism are thus sown, and continue to grow and flourish during the barbarous ages which succeed.

In the mean time, civil government gathers strength and consistency by the establishment of hereditary rights in the person of the king and his subjects. Conquests unite several wandering tribes under the monarch; their chieftains become his counsellors, and moderate his tyranny; the people are fixed to the soil, and have recourse to agriculture to support an increasing population, for whom their flocks and the chase would afford but an insufficient and precarious subsistence. Manufactures, finding a permanent abode, next succeed; individual wealth follows, which in time leads the way to more liberal institutions, by operating as a counterpoise to despotic power. This is the usual progress of improvement in society and government, which often seem to retrograde, when, in fact, they are advancing towards perfection and stability.

As violent bodily diseases are usually the efforts of nature to throw off lingering maladies

which paralyse the vital functions, so often do great changes, though attended with present evils and misery, lead to salutary and permanent results on the body politic. These reflections are made in reference to nations which have improved themselves through the gradual operations of time and circumstances; and are necessary to be borne in mind, to enable us to understand the consequences resulting from the subjection of barbarous tribes to civilized nations.

It is a melancholy fact, that the conquests achieved by modern nations over the coloured and savage races of the European settlements have tended rather to depress than to raise them higher in the scale of existence.

The Romans do not appear to have drawn that broad line of demarcation between themselves and the aboriginal inhabitants of their colonies, who were, after a time, admitted to the enjoyment of the rights of citizenship: they do not seem to have been actuated by the unhappy prejudices against the subjected races which at the present day prevent intermarriages between the conquerors and the conquered. It was by these means that their

governments gained stability and consistency. Their religion was too similar to the heathenism of the inhabitants of the provinces, to give them any great superiority in this respect; and there was no difference of complexion or feature to occasion any natural repugnance to their persons and prevent alliances.

In modern times, on the contrary, all these circumstances operate powerfully in preventing this desirable amalgamation of the white and coloured races of our colonies: Religion itself is enlisted in aid of our other prejudices, and the prohibitions of the Old Testament, with respect to the idolatrous inhabitants of the promised land, are more attended to than the conciliatory spirit of the Christian dispensation. Until this union of blood and interest be effected, the coloured people of our colonies, it is much to be feared, will virtually continue to be oppressed, notwithstanding all the laws which can be made for their protection.

To pursue the analogy that exists between the progress of nations and individuals to maturity, I cannot help thinking that there is a period during their infancy when their own

interest is not sufficient to stimulate them to exertion and improvement, and when a certain degree of compulsion is necessary. Who blames a parent for insisting on his children going to school, or for punishing their misdemeanors? The condition of the serfs in a barbarous country is very similar; and the restraint that is put on their natural liberty is not at this period attended with the degrading effects incidental to a more advanced state of society.

Here I cannot but advert to the want of candour on the part of some of the friends of negro-slavery, who would justify the system by comparing it with European serfship. There is a great difference between the condition of the domestic slave, who works under the immediate inspection of the master or his overseers, and is every moment of his life subjected to the effects of their avarice, and exposed to every burst of passions inflamed by the possession of arbitrary power and caprice, and that of the serf, who, so long as he punctually delivers a certain share of the produce of the land he occupies into the granary of his lord, may remain for years undisturbed in the enjoyment of the remainder.

It may even be a question, whether the serfs of the North of Europe, after making due allowance for early feelings and habits, are not virtually in a happier condition than a large proportion of the agricultural population of Great Britain:—for what does theoretical freedom avail the latter, if the farmer, from excessive competition, is obliged to take his land at a higher rent than will leave him a fair remuneration, and the labourer, from a similar cause, is compelled to accept lower wages than his services are worth? By these observations I must not be understood to assert, that serfship, in the present state of Great Britain, would better the depressed condition of the agricultural labourer, which, being principally occasioned by over-population, could not be improved by increasing the power that inevitable circumstances have placed in the hands of the landholder.

My principal object is, to apply these remarks to the case of the slaves in our colonies, and to show how their hard lot might be alleviated without doing violence to the natural order of improvement, and without resorting to precipi-

tate measures, which would be injurious to the slaves themselves, by producing great present misery and by retarding their civilization; while they would be ruinous to their masters, and by reflection prejudicial to the commerce of the mother country.

It is much to be lamented that a question of such importance in all its bearings should, like so many others in Great Britain, have become a subject of violent party feeling; so that it is hard to say whether the interest of the slaves will be most injured by the injudicious zeal of their friends, or the prejudices of their opponents.

When a party of any kind is once formed in this country, they are extremely unwilling to separate. People so seldom concur in opinion in private life, that there is a certain magical charm in meeting with a large assemblage of their countrymen all agreeing on one subject and zealous in the propagation of their ideas.

Anti-slavery has thus become the watchword of a faction composed of the most discordant materials. This, however, if it was necessary, is another argument for the justice of their de-

mands: but it has the injurous effect of arraying a powerful party against them, who are probably more influenced by opposition to their other real or supposed tenets than inimical to the claims of the oppressed negroes; and it has the further bad effect of offering a field for the extravagant declamations of furious demagogues, who by exaggerated and partial statements work upon the excited passions of those who cannot reason or think for themselves.

At a late anti-slavery meeting, the most zealous advocates for the cause would have been satisfied with the gradual abolition of slavery, by emancipating the children born after a certain period; but at a more recent one held in May 1831, encouraged by the aspect of the times, nothing less than the total, immediate, and unconditional emancipation of the slaves would satisfy the demands of the assembly. I do not mean to contend that the interest of one set of men can be put in competition with the justice due to others; but it is certainly only fair to select the *time* and *means* in such a manner as may be the least injurious to the interests of all.

It is probable that the plan I have to offer will please neither party; but I shall not therefore shrink from stating the conclusions to which I have been led by my reflections on the subject in its various aspects, and from suggesting a mode of alleviating the miseries inseparable from the condition of the slaves, by proposing a species of mitigated servitude, which would still secure the benefit of their services to the proprietors, and would obviate the dangerous consequences of a sudden and complete emancipation.

Daily observation proves the evil and uncertain results of any abrupt change in the condition of men from one extreme to another—whether it be from poverty to wealth, or from the yoke of despotism to unlimited freedom—before the mind is prepared for it in some measure by education or the general diffusion of intelligence.

I am enabled to state from personal observation at the Cape, where it is generally admitted that slavery is found in its mildest form, that in point of intellect the slaves are generally—I of course except the Malays, who are only a semi-

barbarous people—very inferior to the Hottentots, the Kaffres, and other free coloured inhabitants of the colony and its neighbourhood. The oppressive government which formerly existed at the Cape, joined to the prejudices and tyrannical conduct of the colonists, has had the effect of sinking the slaves, and even the Hottentots, who always enjoyed some degree of liberty, still lower than their former place in the scale of improvement previously to their subjection. The slaves, in particular, have been reduced to mere machines, and have become incapable of just reasoning.

Though extending the benefit of entire freedom to a people in this state might not, at the Cape, from their small numbers in proportion to the white population, be attended with any great positive danger to the colony; yet we cannot but suppose that it would be a most perilous experiment in our West India colonies, where the slaves constitute so overwhelming a proportion of the population, aggravated as is their condition by many instances of cruelty which spread like wild-fire among an injured people.

From what I have already said, it must be obvious that my proposition is, *gradually* to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, wherever it may be found practicable. This might be effected by substituting serfship, or villanage, in a somewhat milder form than it exists in Europe at the present day, for slavery; or, in other words, that the planters shall be allowed to retain their claims on the produce of the labour of their slaves and their children; and that, instead of being under the immediate superintendence of the master or his agents, the serfs shall simply be bound to deliver to their masters a certain share of the produce of the lots of land on which they may be located, in the manner of small farmers on the estate of the proprietor.

The only difference between the condition of the serfs thus situated, and that of small farmers in our own country, would consist in the former being still considered as in a certain degree the property of the landholder, without whose consent they could not leave the estate.

To further the important object of ensuring the gradual emancipation of the slaves, or serfs,

a number of regulations should be adopted to prevent oppression, to hold out encouragements to industry, and to prepare their minds for the enjoyment of entire liberty. With this view, I would suggest the following:—

I. That, as at present, the slave shall be allowed to purchase his own freedom, or that of his children.

II. That in case of his failing to pay the master's proportion of the produce of the land, he shall not suffer any arbitrary punishment on the part of the proprietor or his overseers, but only be subject to such as the laws may direct in the case of a similar failure on the part of a free labourer, after due investigation before the competent magistrate.

III. That, as an encouragement to industry, the proportion of produce or rent to be paid annually by the slave shall be fixed for a series of years by competent persons at a rate afterwards to be determined, according to the nature of the soil, &c.—so that the slave shall reap the full benefit of his improvements. Habits of industry would thus be acquired by the operation of the only useful stimulus to exertion;

and it is probable that before any very distant period a large proportion of the slaves would be enabled to purchase their entire freedom, and become valuable tenants on the estates of their original proprietors.

I am aware that many objections would be urged against the practicability of these general suggestions; but I feel persuaded that the principle on which they are founded might be carried into effect, with the aid of such modifications and additions as the experience of individuals interested in its success located in the different colonies might enable them to offer.

CHAPTER IX.

Characteristics of the Slave.—Reputed Arts of the Malays.—Anecdote.—Jealousy of the Malay Girls.—Slaves from Mozambique.—Gradual Amelioration of the Condition of Slaves.—Conduct of the Missionaries.—Degraded State of the Hottentots.—Curious Experiment.—Oppressions of the Dutch. Character of the Hottentots.—Their Vices.—Amiable Traits.—Brutality of the Men.—Effects of Intemperance.—Polygamy.—A mixed Race.—Attractions of the Women.—Corpulence of the Hottentots.

To attempt to describe the character of the slaves at the Cape, would be to give a picture of the manners and state of improvement of the different races from whom they are sprung; modified by subjection to the arbitrary power of their masters.

There are, however, certain characteristics in which all slaves are distinguished from freemen. As the mental faculties are improved by their full exercise; so people, who are habitually restrained in action, and consequently in thought,

must necessarily become degraded in mind. The slaves are peculiarly lowered in the scale of existence, from the evils of absolute control in all their actions being, in their case, superadded to original barbarism. The free savage has his energies and mental faculties constantly brought into action by the necessary cares of providing for his daily wants; but the slave is reduced to the state of a child, or rather of a mere machine, in the hands of his master. His work is assigned to him, and all his wants are provided for without requiring any effort of mind or foresight on his own part. To restore a man in this state to immediate and entire freedom, would be like abandoning a child in a desert, or the wide world, without experience to guide him in finding a subsistence, and without arms to protect him against his enemies.

Notwithstanding the *general* similarity in the character of slaves, those of South Africa differ much according to the people from whom they have sprung. By far the highest in point of intellect, as I have already observed, are the Malays. They are descended from a people

among whom civilization has made great advances, and are an industrious, sober, persevering, and energetic race. They are susceptible of strong attachment to their masters when well used, but never forgive injustice or injuries. From their vindictive character, joined to a great mental superiority and power of concealing their violent passions, they are held in a kind of superstitious dread by the colonists; and a hundred stories are told by the vulgar of the deadly effects of their anger when they are excited by jealousy or revenge. They possess a great knowledge of the natural qualities of plants, and a great deal more faith is placed in their medical skill than in that of the European surgeons. It is also very generally believed among the Dutch, and the lower classes of the English in the colony, that they can administer poison in such a manner as to destroy the health, without occasioning death for many months, or even years.

Though we may regard such stories in a great measure as vulgar superstitions, yet it is not easy entirely to discredit them; and be-

cause such practices may be uncommon or unknown in European countries, it would not be quite philosophical to conclude that they are therefore unknown in other parts of the world. After making due allowance for the ignorance and exaggeration of the lower classes, who are incapable of investigating causes and effects, I cannot believe that so general a fear of the art of the Malays could exist without some reason for it; nor can I resist the evidence of the numerous instances of it which have been related to me.

While residing in the district of Swellendam, I observed a Malay slave, herding his master's cattle, who had a very large tumour exactly over the stomach, and was exceedingly lean and unhealthy in his appearance. Having never observed anything of the kind before, I was curious to know the cause of it. He told me that while at Cape Town he had had an intrigue with the wife of another Malay, who revenged himself by poisoning him in the manner I saw him. On questioning him more particularly, he said that the swelling came on gradually, without any previous ailment of any kind, until

it increased to its present size. He now began to suspect whence the injury proceeded, and succeeded in appeasing the wrath of his comrade, who gave him some medicine which prevented the further increase of the tumour, and it had continued in the same state ever since.

Many of the English labourers at Cape Town live in habits of intimacy with the Malay girls, who are often very handsome, but so exceedingly jealous that it is considered dangerous to incur their resentment; indeed, I have been told many instances of their being treated like the poor Malay I have mentioned. In this case they find it most prudent to make their peace with them as soon as possible, to save their lives. These girls are generally faithful, but readily form new alliances when the object of their attachment leaves them for any considerable time. The same observation holds good, however, in an equal degree with regard to the other female slaves and Hottentots. This shows us sufficiently that the conduct of a certain class of females in more civilized countries is rather the effect of necessity than choice.

The Malays make excellent slaves when well treated; and are much more valuable than the others, from the quickness of their apprehensions, and the readiness with which they learn the different trades required in the colony. They frequently purchase their freedom, and become wealthy by their industry. They are all Mahometans, and hang together like the Jews and the sectaries of our own country, forming a distinct society, and employing their own people in preference to others. By this means, and their avaricious character, they soon become independent in their circumstances; and in their general conduct are much superior to the bulk of the European labourers in the settlement.

The next class in point of intellect to the Malays are those negro slaves who come from the western coast of Africa. In that part of the continent, the density of the population, and the facility of cultivation afforded by the tropical rains, have led to some advances in agriculture, which have raised the inhabitants somewhat higher in the scale of improvement than the pastoral tribes of the more arid por-

tions of Africa. The slaves descended from these races are consequently more habituated to constant labour and the exercise of their natural faculties; but, at the same time, they are stupid, and constitutionally heavy and phlegmatic.

I believe it is for these reasons that the slave-traders have resorted to the tropical parts of this quarter of the globe in pursuit of their iniquitous traffic, in preference to its more temperate and barbarous regions. A patient phlegmatic character like that of the Dutch, with a frame capable of enduring continued labour, are qualities of much greater utility to a West India planter than the possession of reasoning faculties, which would only tend to make the slave miserable and discontented with his degraded situation.

The slaves from the coast of Mozambique are the lowest in point of intellect of any in South Africa, and are so proverbial for their extreme stupidity that the greatest affront a Dutch colonist can cast on another's understanding is to observe that he is "als domme als een Mozambiquer;" or, as stupid as a Mozambique.

It is very absurd to assert that slaves have no sense of the injustice of their subjection, or feeling of its hopeless miseries. So far, however, it is true, that their consciousness of its iniquity is in exact proportion to the development of their faculties. Even supposing that they fancied their white masters to be possessed of a natural superiority over them—which belief, by the way, the slave-masters at the Cape carefully inculcate — and that they had not daily instances of cruelty and injustice before their eyes, the very circumstance of their seeing European labourers and freed blacks in a prosperous state must painfully remind them of their own unhappy condition. It necessarily follows, that the slaves must be most contented with their situation where there are the fewest free labourers, and where they are from other circumstances kept in ignorance of their natural rights.

We may, therefore, justly question the benevolence of those people who would by their instruction render the slaves more keenly alive to the injustice of their subjection, while they have no means of asserting their freedom; and

when, in their present condition, entire liberty would be attended with the most unhappy consequences to themselves as well as to the white population of our colonies. It would certainly be more humane, and at the same time more politic, to manage matters so that a gradual improvement in their condition should precede instruction. The slaves would thus be happier in the mean time, and would consider every concession as a boon for which they were bound to feel grateful, and peace would be preserved between the whites and the negroes.

There is another principle which should never be lost sight of: namely, that the more oppressed and degraded a class of men may have been, the more cautious and gradual should be the measures that are employed to restore them to their lost rights. But while we deprecate the sudden emancipation of the slaves, which would be probably attended with the most dangerous consequences in our West India colonies, we should at the same time urge the necessity of an immediate amelioration in their condition, to avert the still more fright-

ful consequences of refusing some concessions in favour of a people who are already but too sensible of their injuries, and who are indirectly stimulated to revolt by the interested and fanatical zeal of missionaries and teachers.

I by no means assert that the missionaries have any intention of exciting the slaves to rebel; but I have seen too much of their ignorant fanaticism, to doubt for a moment that such will be the natural effect of their mode of instruction and of their political feelings. Any one who is at all acquainted with the republican habits of our sectarians in England, and their concealed ambition, must see the inevitable consequences of their being placed as an independent body between the European colonists and the slaves.

The missionaries are themselves but the mere slaves of a party, half religious, half political; and, whatever their individual sentiments may be, their livelihood depends on their adherence to the prejudices of the parent society. They cannot act or speak without subjecting themselves to the animadversions of the other missionaries, who are ambitious of the applause of

their particular sects. The position they hold in the colonies makes them the natural depositaries of the injuries of the slaves, whether real or pretended; and when we consider that their interest, ambition, and feelings of humanity enlist them on the side of the negroes, their influence over these people must of course be a subject of much apprehension. Their situation, indeed, involves them in a most serious responsibility; for even the most benevolent intentions, when not regulated by sound judgment, may lead them into the most fatal mistakes. The worst of it is, that many of the missionaries spring from the lower classes of society, and are generally lamentably ignorant of human nature; and, in short, of everything but the religious dogmas of their sect, which are warped and perverted from the original simplicity of our religion by the narrowness of their understandings.

It may be said, that the missionaries have been the means of bringing to light many instances of cruelty towards the slaves, which, by opening the eyes of the British public to the abuses of power in our colonies, have led

to beneficial institutions, and some amelioration in their condition. Of this merit it would be unjust to deprive them; and, as an individual, I cheerfully bear testimony to their utility to this extent. The objections I have to urge against them are confined to the general effects of an ignorant and prejudiced body of men establishing themselves as the friends and protectors of the slaves in our colonies, and consequently in a hostile position with regard to the masters, which must necessarily tend to foster discontent and insubordination on the part of the negroes.

What should we think, if a set of men in England should constitute themselves the judges between masters and their apprentices, and listen to all the complaints of discontented servants against their employers, whether they were true or false? Would not this have a direct tendency to create the very evils they sought to remedy; and would not the servants be led to fancy that a hundred injuries and acts of oppression were committed against them, which had no foundation but in their own unreasonable and excited minds? And

would not the masters naturally feel exasperated by the interference of these people, and be in many cases provoked into arbitrary measures against their servants in support of their authority?

If this were the case in our own country, how much more would the observation apply to a slave colony, where the master is vested with more despotic power over his dependants, and where the working class are more ignorant and unreasonable!

I have been led into longer details regarding the slaves than I anticipated; but I hope to be excused by the reader, on account of the importance of the subject. I feel also that my remarks are liable to be misinterpreted by people of a different mode of thinking, or whose opinions may be formed on the partial statements or exaggerations of opposing parties.

In justice to my own motives, I therefore think it necessary to say, that I never have possessed, nor would I possess, a slave on any consideration; and that I have no common interest with, or personal feeling against, either the slave-holders or their opponents. I have

left South Africa for ever, and have offered my land there for sale, and intend to proceed to Upper Canada in a few months, where, God willing, I hope to earn an independent livelihood, and be able to bring up my family in virtuous and industrious habits, in a country which is more free from most of the sources of demoralization than any of our other colonies. It is now time to describe another and more interesting portion of the inhabitants of the Cape, respecting whom I have hitherto touched but casually.

At the period of the first settlement of the colony, the Hottentots appear to have been among the most barbarous of the savage tribes of Africa; and they do not even seem to have had any regular form of government beyond the temporary authority of some petty chief in times of danger. Inhabiting a country which for the most part was, from its aridity, little adapted for cultivation, and abounding in game, it might naturally be expected that a number of petty tribes, thinly scattered over its surface, would have made but small advancement in agriculture and the other arts of life.

We are, however, not too readily to believe all the accounts of them which are given by some of the early travellers, to whose credulity there seems to have been no bounds. They have told so many stories of their filthy and disgusting usages, that by common consent the Hottentots have been considered by all civilized nations as a race sunk to the very lowest state of degradation of which human creatures are susceptible. It is not fair to judge of a people by external habits, and to conclude that they are as much debased in their minds as they are filthy in their persons. Were this the case, we should expect to find the Hottentots of the present day, who are much improved in respect to cleanliness, equally improved in point of intellect: but the fact is otherwise.

It is not a little amusing to read some of the early accounts of these people, and the curious conclusions to which travellers have been led by their superficial mode of reasoning as to their capability of being civilized. I think it is Kolben who relates an ingenious experiment made by a Dutch governor to ascertain whether a Hottentot could be "tamed,"

as he calls it. He mentions that the said learned governor, who seems to have regarded a wild Hottentot in the same light as he did a baboon or monkey, had seized upon one of these people when a child, and, after sending him to Holland, where he made the most astonishing progress in acquiring the Low Dutch language, besides various other accomplishments,— and, among the rest, to wear manufactured clothes in cold weather,—brought him back to the Cape to persuade the rest of his countrymen to wear breeches, and quietly put their necks under the yoke of the Hollanders.

The result of this curious experiment, which was intended to put the question at rest for ever as to the natural capabilities of these people, was, that the Hottentot, who seems to have been a very sensible fellow, saw quite enough of the character of the white population to prefer the society of his countrymen and relations to the luxuries and vices of the Dutch. It would have been happy for the rest of his countrymen had they been able to maintain their freedom, with all its accompanying privations, rather than submit their persons and lands to

the arbitrary rule of such masters as European nations have proved to the original possessors of their colonies.

The truly Dutch experiment to which I have alluded, is only calculated to excite a smile among sensible people; but the natural effects resulting from the shallow reasoning that gave rise to it, lead us to more serious reflections. The poor Hottentots were looked upon by the ignorant colonists as a people incapable by nature of improvement, and were treated like horses and oxen, as a part of the property of their conquerors. They originally were possessed of cattle and sheep in abundance, and the country teemed with game of all kinds, which together afforded them a subsistence proportionate to their habits and necessities. They have gradually been robbed or cheated of their flocks and pasture-grounds. And what have they got in return? Three words answer this question—Vice, Poverty, Oppression.

Not contented with the possession of everything that was valuable which originally belonged to this unhappy people, and as if for the purpose of cutting off every avenue by

which they might arrive at independence, the Hottentots were considered by the colonial laws as incapable of holding lands in the country of their fathers. They were thus consigned to hopeless poverty and degradation. What could be expected from such an execrable system but moral and intellectual debasement?

Happily for this much-injured race, a new order of things has, within these few years, dawned on the colony, and lands have, for the first time, been granted to the Hottentots; and it may confidently be expected that their industry will be increased and their morals improved in proportion to the inducements held out to exertion.

A national character may be considered to be composed of two ingredients, — the character derived from physical constitution, and the character which is the result of habits and institutions. In treating of this subject, it is necessary to bear these two operating causes in mind, if we would arrive at anything like distinct conceptions of the matter. In observing any of the original and unmixed races of men, we cannot but perceive the striking uniformity

of character which pervades the mass of individuals of which they are composed. But when the different races become intermixed, the physical qualities of one race augment or modify those of another, and an endless diversity of individul character is produced, which prepares the nation where this intermixture has taken place for a more rapid advance in knowledge and attainments. To these physical causes, rather than to political ones, we may perhaps attribute the variety of individual character which we observe in Great Britain.

The contempt occasioned by the filthy and disgusting habits of the Hottentots, has led most travellers to consider them quite unworthy of their attention, and they have too hastily concluded that nothing noble or beautiful in the mind could exist under so foul and disgusting an exterior. Errors and exaggerations have thus been handed down, and servilely adopted by each succeeding traveller; so that, degraded as they now are by oppression and the vices of their masters, it is not easy to form a correct judgment of their original condition.

Vaillant, notwithstanding his romance and vanity, has given by far the truest account of the manners of both the Dutch and the Hottentots. Mr. Barrow's description of the inhabitants of the colony is also excellent, and, I believe, not at all too high-coloured, when we consider the time at which he wrote. The country was then in a state of high excitement from a relaxation of the laws, when the vices and peculiarities of the contending parties stand out in bold relief. His mind, however, was deeply imbued with British prejudices; and, though he shows much acuteness of observation, considering the few opportunities afforded by an official situation, we are by no means to take him for the surest guide as to the character of a people he saw only casually. He has fallen into a great mistake where he describes the Hottentots as a phlegmatic and apathetic race. They no doubt appeared so to him, from their being then crushed to the earth by the remorseless tyranny of the Dutch.

The Hottentots are possessed of acute, though not very powerful or durable feelings. Their character is one of singular weakness, joined to

the most lively perceptions and observation of external things. Their reasoning powers are of a mean order. They have not a little cunning when their suspicions are excited; but they are habitually honest, sincere, and confiding; and will rather steal than cheat. They are quick in noting peculiarities of character or manner, but are incapable of forming a chain of deductions from their observations. They are also peculiarly ignorant of relative value and numbers. Out of a dozen Hottentots, I have found only one or two able to count to the number of twenty; and I remember one of them, who was by no means inferior in other respects, refusing to serve me for ten rix dollars a month, telling me he had always got *five* from the Dutch. After vainly attempting to show him his mistake, I was at last obliged to take him on his own terms.

The Hottentots are fickle in the extreme; quitting on a sudden whim a place where they have been well fed and well treated for months, for another where they know they will be much worse off. If you ask them why they leave you, their usual answer is, "Almagtig! myn-

heer, ik heb hier geweest voor een hailen jaar." —Almighty! sir, I have been here for a whole year." If they have liked their situation, they will readily return to you again after they have had their ramble, and admit that they were great fools to change it, but that they were tired and wanted to roam a little.

The Hottentots are generous in the extreme to their friends and acquaintances, and can refuse them a share of nothing they possess. This is one cause of their general poverty, and that so few of them acquire any considerable property of any kind. Oppression has drawn the bonds of union closer between them, as is always the case in such circumstances. A Cape-Dutchman's sympathies are confined to his own family: he knows not the feeling of friendship beyond the circle of his immediate relatives. But the Hottentots are like one large family, bound together by common injuries, common feelings, and common interest. This union constitutes their happiness; and of this comfort tyranny cannot deprive them.

Theft is very uncommon among them, and they may safely be entrusted with anything

but intoxicating liquors, which they are not able to resist. I have been robbed of wine and spirits by them over and over again; but their want of art in concealing their depredations of this kind showed sufficiently that deceit or dishonesty formed no part of their general character. Sometimes they will steal articles of food to supply their half-famished companions who are travelling along the road, but hardly ever for themselves. I have left all other articles completely at their mercy, when they might have helped themselves with little chance of discovery; but I do not recollect a single instance of their robbing me of any article of clothing, which they might easily have turned into money or brandy at the licensed public-houses along the great roads; which have been, I know, in many cases a source of great demoralization to the inhabitants, by being receptacles for stolen goods. I speak of the Hottentots as I found them, before they were additionally corrupted by intercourse with the lower classes of our own countrymen in the British settlements of the colony.

The most amiable trait in the character of

these people is their sincerity. It is a well-known fact that a Hottentot, when he is examined before a court of justice, generally tells the whole truth without disguise, though he is certain that his own conviction and punishment will immediately follow his confession. So often have I observed this noble trait in their character, that I would at any time attach more credit to the assertion of a Hottentot regarding any simple matter of fact, than to the oath of one of the lower classes of our own countrymen in the colony when they have any object to serve by deception.

I now come to the vices of the Hottentots. Though incapable of lasting resentment, they are passionate, savage, and cruel to their women and children on the slightest provocation. The men hardly ever come to blows in their quarrels; but the unhappy wife generally has to suffer for every temporary resentment of the husband, whether she has been the cause of it or not. On these occasions, the brutal husband often beats his wife in the most cruel manner, treads her under foot, and uses her in a way that would be death to a more delicate female. The wife, on

her part, is by no means deficient in the artillery of her sex, and uses her other natural weapons with great effect, scratching, biting, and tearing the hair with the most undaunted courage, until she sinks to the ground with exhaustion; but the tongue still wags with unabated volubility in an overwhelming torrent of oaths and contumelious terms, which aggravates her punishment, until the infuriated husband is driven half-frantic with disappointed rage. Contrary to the well-established maxim applied to such cases, I have sometimes interfered to prevent fatal consequences; but, finding that only tended to increase the evil, I was reluctantly compelled to allow them to belabour each other in their own way.

These shocking scenes are generally occasioned by drinking, to which vice they are very much addicted. Intoxication seems to have a much more infuriating effect on savages than on civilized men, which is simply because they are less habituated to self-restraint. It is for the same reason that a vulgar person may easily be distinguished from a gentleman under the like circumstances, and that the effects of in-

temperance are more pernicious to the former than to the latter.

There is, however, nothing rude in the manners of the Hottentots on ordinary occasions: they are extremely affectionate, and are very delicate in avoiding causes of offence, never contradicting or interrupting each other in conversation, unless they are excited by violent passions. Their conversation is at the same time coarse and unrefined, though less so than that of the Cape-Dutch.

Polygamy seems never to have been in use among them; and I have often been told by aged Hottentots that illicit correspondence between the sexes was formerly very rare, and severely punished by their laws. The superstitious respect which savages entertain for men of a different colour has been made a powerful engine of corruption against them; and European nations, instead of improving their morals, have become the active agents of their debasement. Most of the Hottentots within the boundaries of the colony are more or less of a mixed race, arising chiefly from the connexion of white men with Hottentot women. The

older Hottentots are, however, generally of a purer race; which shows that their corruption has been gradually increasing since the first settlement of the colony. The women seldom repel the advances of white men, for whom they have a decided personal preference, and they are generally faithful to them while the connexion subsists; they are so proud of these temporary engagements, that they seldom consent to live with one of their own nation afterwards.

It may seem somewhat extraordinary to Europeans, but it is nevertheless true, that the colonists, both Dutch and English, are very partial to the female Hottentots. This, of course, is carefully concealed by the Dutchmen from their wives; and they apply the most opprobrious epithets and affect the greatest disgust to the persons of the Hottentots on all occasions. Some of the features of these people do not certainly agree with the commonly received ideas of beauty; but they have expressive eyes and a liveliness and grace of carriage that render them far from being unattractive. The colonial female Hottentots,

indeed, are often strikingly elegant in their proportions, and they have all that lightness and ease in their motions for which all savages are remarkable: we need not therefore wonder that they are often preferred to the clumsy, torpid, and insensible Dutchwomen, with their stony eyes and jealous domineering manners.

The offspring of the Dutch by the Hottentot women are distinguished for uniting in their persons the vices of both races. In point of understanding, they are superior to the Hottentots; and, by what I have seen of them, I should think that, under other circumstances, many of them would show a decided superiority over the Dutch: they assume it over the Hottentots, with whom they live, and hate the white population, to whose society they can never aspire: they are also a taller and stouter race than the Hottentots, and share in some degree in the constitutional tendency of the Dutch to corpulence. The intermixture of races seems to improve the intellectual powers as much as it does the bodily proportions.

The true Hottentots are a small and slight race, with acute senses and lively irritable

tempers. People of this description seldom become corpulent; and I have never seen an instance of a Hottentot man becoming absolutely fat, though it is not at all rare among the females.

CHAPTER X.

Passion of the Hottentots for Music.—A Summer Evening.—Musical Instruments.—Extraordinary knowledge of Harmony.—Singular Anecdote.—Hottentot Airs.—Intoxicating Liquors.—The Karree Plant.—Medical knowledge of the Hottentots.—Plants of the Country.—Remedy for Snake-bites.—Feats of a Gift Drinker.—Poisonous Snakes.—Hottentot Superstitions.—Belief in Witchcraft.—A hideous Animal.—Stratagem of a cunning Woman.—Injustice towards Slaves.

The Hottentots have a great passion for music, which generally accompanies a constitutional sensibility of frame, and disposes the mind for the reception of kind and benevolent feelings. I have often listened with great pleasure to the wild and melancholy notes of the "gorah" and "ramkee," when sitting in the cool of a placid South-African evening on the "stoep," or platform, before my brother's house, while the sun was sinking in unclouded beauty

behind the bold outline of the chain of mountains which formed one side of the romantic valley. There is something peculiarly calm and soothing in a summer evening in that country, when the dazzling glare of noon is past, and the air is filled with the sparkling fire-flies, and the crickets open in full chorus with their drowsy unceasing din.

At this delightful hour, we every night heard some old Hottentot in the servants' hut near the house playing on the "gorah," the sounds of which resembled the distant notes of the bugle. This curious instrument is formed by stretching a piece of the twisted entrails of a sheep along a thin stick about three feet in length, in the manner of a bow and string. At one end, the string is tied simply to the extremity of the stick; but at the other, it is fixed to a piece of flattened quill about an inch in length, cut in an oval shape to suit the opening of the lips. The other end of this piece of quill is then secured by a short bit of string to the opposite end of the stick, so that it is strained in a line with the string, with the flat side outwards. The instrument is played upon by

introducing the quill between the lips, and blowing in a particular way, holding the stick in a horizontal position. The peculiarity of the "gorah" is, that it naturally runs into the notes of the common bugle, which it also resembles in sound.

The "ramkee" is constructed on the same principle as a guitar, by stretching six strings along a flat piece of thin board, with the half of a gourd or "calabash" at one end, over which a piece of dried skin is strained, on which the bridge is placed. It is played on after the manner of the guitar; and, in the hands of a skilful performer, makes no contemptible music. This instrument has great compass, as the performer can produce the octaves by touching the middle of the strings lightly with the chin.

The Hottentot women have naturally very sweet voices; but those of the men are by no means so good. I have often been astonished at the facility and taste with which they pick up and select any tunes. Sometimes, when our Hottentot servant girls happened to hear some air played on the flute which struck their fancy, I was agreeably surprised in a few days to find

it sung all over the neighbourhood, with the addition of a second of their own composing, which was generally in excellent taste.

I took some pains to discover whether this knowledge of harmony was natural, or acquired from the missionaries: but I ascertained that the latter knew little or nothing of the science of music; and they told me, that whenever they taught the Hottentots a simple hymn or psalm tune, they instantly added the second of their own accord, as if by natural instinct.

I am persuaded that the faculty of harmonizing simple airs is, strictly speaking, a natural power, and dependent on a peculiar formation of the organs of the ear, in the same manner as the faculty of deriving pleasure from melody. Thus we find that some nations possess one of these faculties in a great, and others in a small degree.

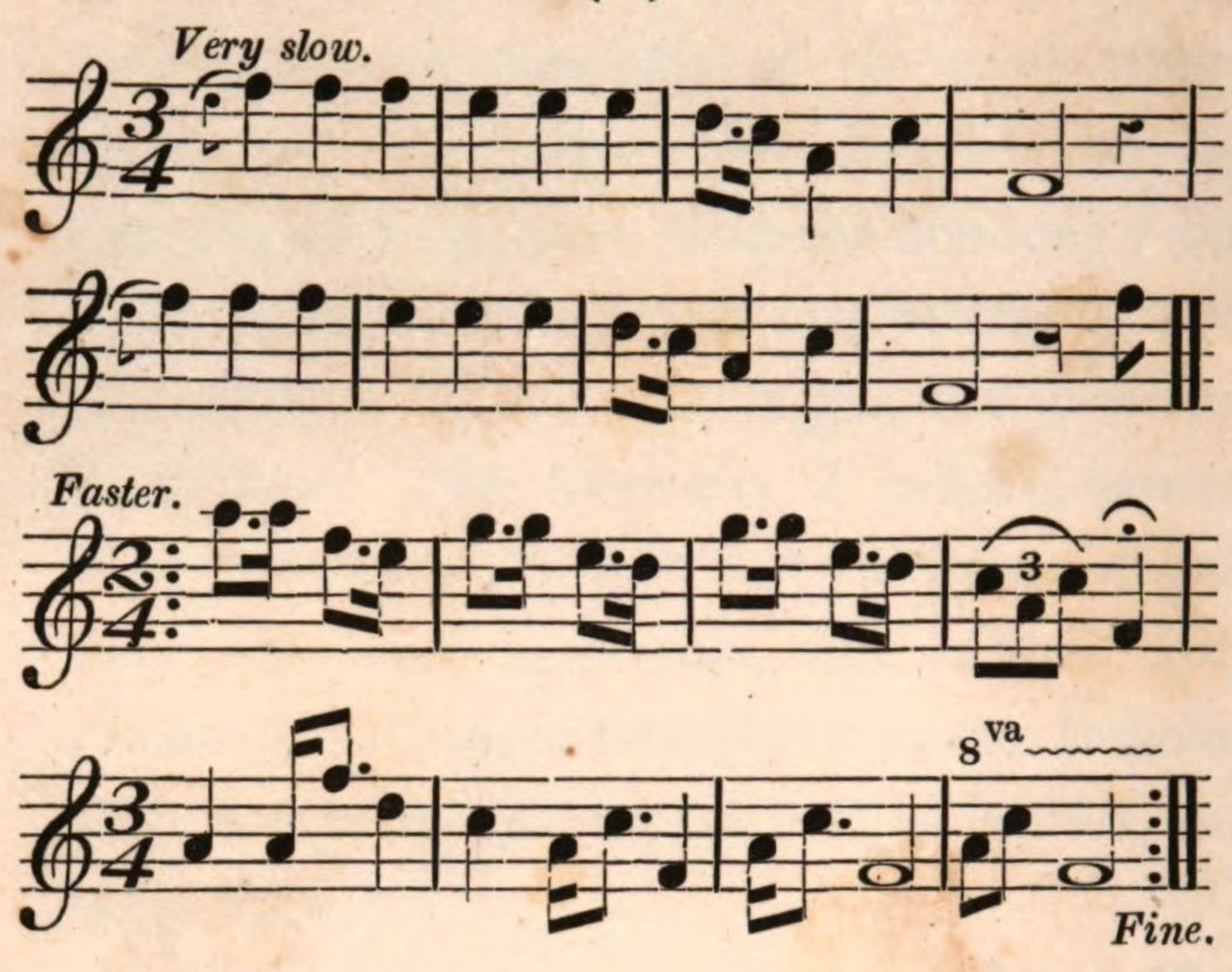
The Scotch, for instance, have a great natural taste for melody, and but little for harmony; as may be shown from the general character of their music, which abounds in simple pathos, but is not so susceptible of improvement by the addition of a second as that of many other

countries. The seconds to airs composed by Scotchmen are generally of the most vulgar and insipid description. The English, on the other hand, have more taste for harmony; but their national airs—if they can be said to have any national music—are vulgar, and deficient in pathos. The Germans, I believe, possess both these natural faculties in a higher degree than any nation in Europe, and in their taste for harmony seem to be superior to the Italians: their compositions are also full of genius and originality.

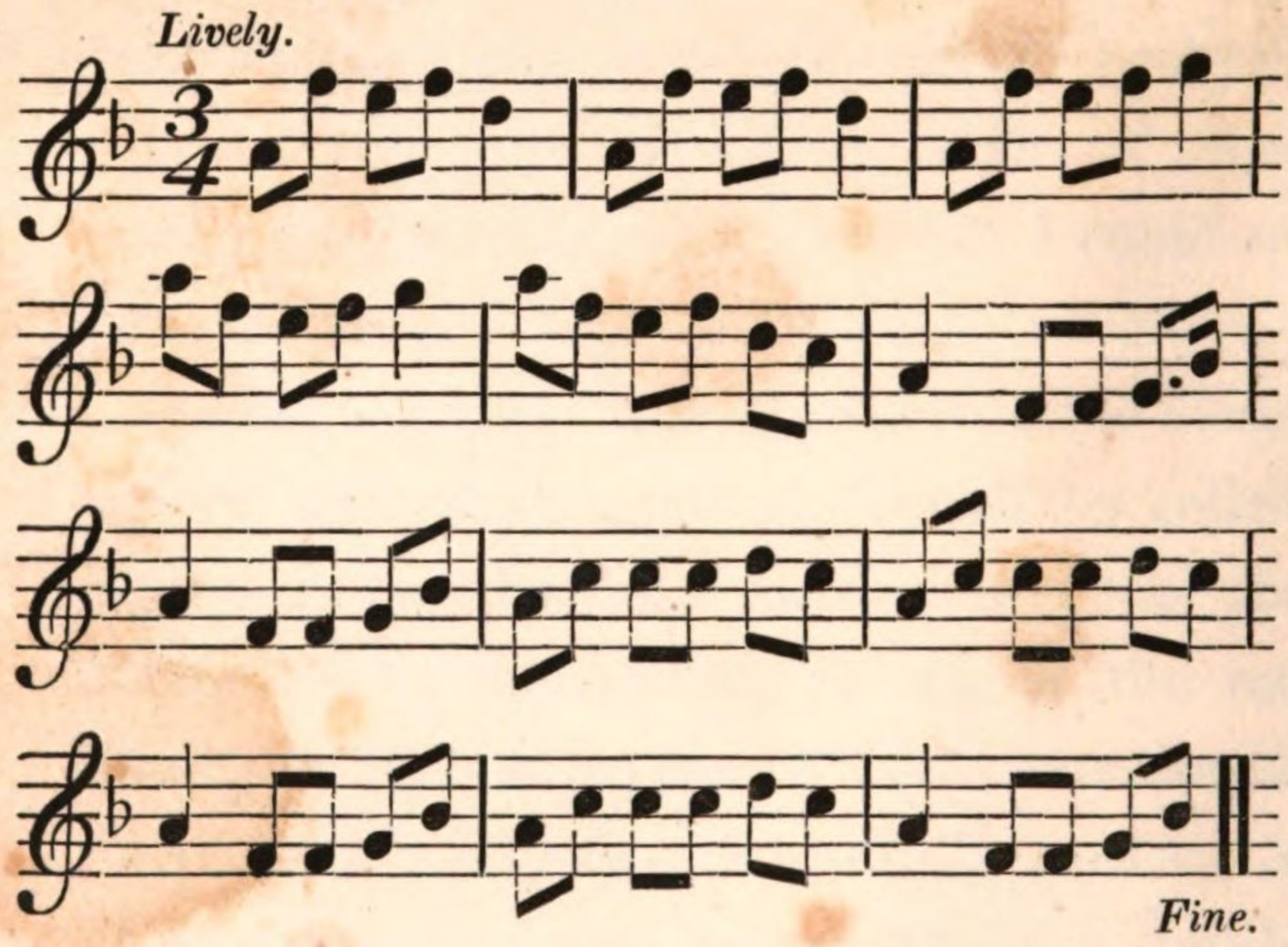
I have often heard a whole family of Hottentots, including children of seven or eight years of age, join in singing an air or hymn without any apparent effort, each of them taking his particular part; and yet I could not perceive the slightest discordance.

An old German officer, formerly in the Dutch service, and who supported himself by collecting specimens of natural history, told me, that once when he was residing at one of the missionary stations in pursuit of his occupation, he happened to play that beautifully pathetic air of Gluck's, *Che faro senza Euridice*, on his

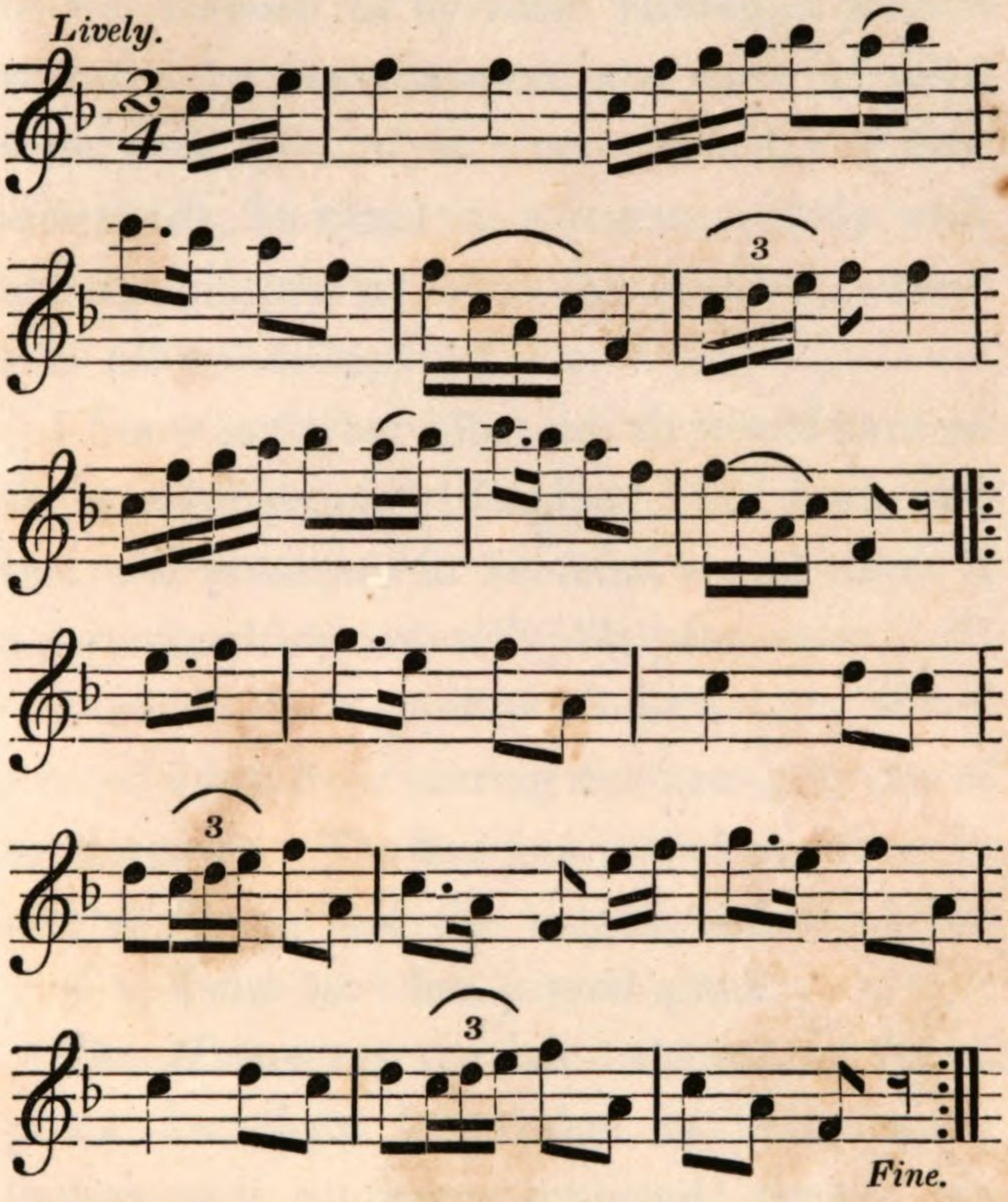
(1.)



(2.)



(3.)



violin, when he was surprised to observe that he was listened to by some Hottentot women with the deepest attention, and some of them were even affected to tears. In a day or two afterwards, he heard his favourite melody with accompaniments all over the country, wherever his wanderings led him.

I know not what effect this air would have on the country people in England; but I am sure that the peasantry in Scotland would think it a very mawkish, unintelligible production.

I subjoin three genuine Hottentot airs, which I noted down from hearing them sung by one of their women. The first is a particular favourite among them; and the second and third are used to dance to, when played quick.

The Hottentots are not indebted to Europeans for their knowledge of intoxicating liquors, as is commonly supposed; though the introduction of brandy among them has had the effect of increasing the habit of drunkenness tenfold, by facilitating the means of gratification. They have long been acquainted with a particular plant which grows in some of the most arid situations of the interior of the

colony, and is only known to a few of them: this plant, as well as the drink which is made by its means, is called "Karree."

The root is dug up and carefully dried in the sun, and is then stamped to a powder between two stones, and kept in a bag, which is generally hung up in their huts. When the Hottentots find any honey in the woods or rocks, they dilute it copiously with water, made a little warm, and put into a bucket, which is covered over with a thick cloth. A small quantity of the powder is then added to the liquid, which it has the property of fermenting. So rapid is the process, that I have often seen them commence the operation at eight or nine o'clock at night, and be furiously intoxicated and beating their wives long before daylight the next morning. A remarkable circumstance connected with this plant is, that the quantity of the powder is very much increased, like yeast, at each brewing. When the liquid is sufficiently fermented, it is poured off; and the powder, now quadrupled in quantity, is taken out and washed in clean water, and then suspended in a small bag to dry. It is thus that the Hottentots keep up

their supply of this fermenting powder, and sell what they do not require to their neighbours. I have known them give a cow for half a cupful.

It is not from the report of the Hottentots that I state the circumstance of the powder increasing in quantity, having tried it myself with sugar and water, and had ocular demonstration of the fact: but sugar soon destroys the virtue of the powder. I have also used every endeavour to get a sight of the plant growing; but the Hottentots, to whom it is familiar, are so jealous of their secret, that I could never prevail on any of them to point it out to me. I have been told by a botanist who knew much of these people, that the "karree" plant is a species of *Mesembryanthemum;* but I cannot vouch for his correctness.

Like the Malays, the Hottentots have a great knowledge of the medicinal properties of the plants of the country. When they are sick, they are continually trying one thing or another to procure relief; and they thus often stumble on useful remedies. They were the discoverers of the "Buchu," or *Diosma Capensis,*

which they have long used internally as a stomachic, and externally, infused in brandy, for rheumatism, &c.

In treating other maladies, they are also very successful. I have known many virulent diseases to be effectually removed by decoctions from plants of the country; and one in particular, which occurred under my immediate observation, was cured by a Hottentot doctress, after the common European remedies had totally failed. During my residence near the frontier of the colony, I observed that one of my servants, a Hottentot, was in a most deplorable state. He had been taking various decoctions from plants, which were prepared by a woman; but they did him no permanent good, though they alleviated the symptoms of his disorder for the time. At last he became so ill that he could do no kind of work, and could not sleep at night from the racking pains he suffered in different parts of his body. I now found it necessary to send him away to obtain the advice of an European surgeon. Two or three years afterwards, I met him in the streets of Grahamstown, and, to my astonishment, quite recovered; for I

thought his case rather desperate. He told me that he had been under the care of an English surgeon for many weeks, without any benefit; he had then applied to an old Hottentot woman, a famous doctress among them, who cured him effectually in a very short time.

The Hottentots use a great variety of medicinal plants; but they generally make a great secret of them for their own gain. The "plat doorn" (*Arctopus echinatus*, Lin.) has long been known to some of the surgeons of the colony; but though a decoction of the root of this plant often cures the natives, it has not been found successful with Europeans, alone; but has produced excellent effects when joined with mercury. The leaves of the "wilde rabas" (*Gunnera perpensa*, Lin.), and the leaves of the *Phlomis leonurus* and *leonitis*, Lin., are often used along with the first-mentioned plant. A friend has furnished me with the botanical names of these plants, which I have copied, and give them merely as some of the remedies adopted by the Hottentots, in the hope of their being found useful; but I cannot pretend to say that they are the best among the many

different kinds employed in the colony. The "wilde rabas" is also used in conjunction with another plant, the name of which I forget, but which I have seen in England. A variety of remedies are adopted for snake bites, among which a decoction from the leaves and root of the *mellitus* may be mentioned. Another specific has been lately found, called the "slangen wortel" (*Catula Capensis* and *anthemoides*).

The account given of the discovery of the virtues of this plant is curious. Two Hottentot or slave girls were herding sheep in the interior of the settlement, when one of them was unfortunately bitten by a very venomous snake. Her companion stayed some time with her to endeavour to get her to the Dutchman's house where they lived; but the effect of the poison was so rapid, that she was obliged to leave her and run home for assistance. When she returned from the house, which was at a considerable distance, with some of the other servants, she was surprised to find the girl, whom she had left in great pain, sitting up and much recovered. It appeared, that in her agony she had chewed a plant which grew by her side

without knowing what she did, and that it had the effect of counteracting the poison. This plant then got the name of the "slangen wortel," or snake-root.

The Hottentots often extract the poison from the most venomous snakes and swallow it, taking care that it does not touch the teeth or gums: they believe that it prevents them from being bitten by the snakes, or, if they are, from being injured by the poison. One of these "gift-drinkers," as they call them, lived near Groot Vaders Bosch, and many extraordinary stories were told us by the Dutch and Hottentots of his feats: among others, they said that they had seen him take some of the most poisonous snakes in his hand and provoke them to bite him, without his sustaining any injury.

I never had an opportunity, however, of ascertaining the truth of these statements; but there is no doubt of the fact of their swallowing the poison for the purpose stated. They say that they must take fresh doses of this curious preventive every six months at least, and that it is dangerous to be bitten by a more poisonous

snake than the kind from which they were supplied with the antidote.

The belief in the efficacy of this practice is so general, both among the Dutch and the Hottentots, that it would be worth while to make a few experiments to ascertain the truth before we entirely discredit the circumstance. It does not seem improbable, that by inuring the constitution to the action of the poison in this manner, it will be rendered less liable to its injurious effects when received into the circulation, in the same way as inoculation diminishes the virulence of the small-pox. Another circumstance they mention is, that the "gift-drinkers" cannot use milk so long as the influence of the poison remains with them, from its turning sour on the stomach. One thing, however, should be stated—namely, that though the poisonous snakes are most frequently met with, yet more than two-thirds of the different species found in the colony are innocuous.

Dr. Smith, now superintendent of the Museum at Cape Town, adopted a very ingenious mode of ascertaining what kinds of snakes were really poisonous. He was several years attached

to the army medical department at Grahamstown, where many cases of snake-bites came under his observation, which were principally among the Hottentots. He made a point of telling them on all occasions, that he could not cure them unless they found the snakes which had bitten them: by this means he soon succeeded in forming a tolerable collection of the most dangerous species, which convinced him that their number was much smaller than was generally imagined by the natives.

The Hottentots have a great many superstitions, but none of them of a gloomy or appalling description: they sometimes talk about ghosts, but have little fear of them or of any other spirits. It may be observed, that the superstitions of a country generally are tinctured by the character of the inhabitants, and by the nature of the climate and scenery.

In half-civilized regions, where despotism, priestcraft, and crime have reigned paramount — where the climate is changeable, and the scenery wild and gloomy,—we find the people the most prone to believe in the existence of spirits and supernatural agency. There is some-

thing in a damp and cloudy atmosphere which depresses the mind, and disposes it for the reception of melancholy and superstitious impressions. In a country where every natural and artificial object reminds us of past generations—where ruined edifices and the trees sighing in the wintry blast excite saddening reflections,—it is natural for us to fancy that the spirits of the departed still hover round their original tenements, and watch over the actions of their descendants. Thus, every ruined castle has its ghost to scare the benighted traveller; and every dark lane, where a murder has been committed, has its wailing spirit calling out for vengeance, and frightening the simple country-folks.

In a newly-settled colony, on the contrary, where everything is changing, and where the same house or district is rarely occupied by three succeeding generations, such superstitions can gain no resting-place; and the injured spirits, finding no one interested in their fate, and no suitable domicile on earth, remain quietly at home, leaving people to pursue their usual avocations undisturbed. The Dutch at the

Cape are not without these gloomy imaginings, which seem to be in a great measure of European origin, in addition to those of the natives.

The superstitions of the Hottentots are confined to the belief in witchcraft and the power of charms; and few of them are without some article to protect themselves against real and imaginary dangers. They carefully preserve a certain skin on the birth of a child, a part of which is put in a little bag and hung round its neck, to be worn through life as a safeguard against all kind of evils. When an elephant is killed, they also cut out some pieces of stick, which are usually found in a small cell in the skin of the head, and wear them about the neck, which they think effectually secures the wearer from the rage of that dangerous animal. Few elephant-hunters are without this potent charm. They also, as well as the Dutch colonists, believe in the existence of certain strange animals which have never been seen by any of the English inhabitants of the colony, though they positively assert having beheld them themselves. One of these creatures is known by the

name of the "dassic," or rabbit-adder; which, they say, has the body of a snake, exceedingly short and thick, and a hairy head resembling a rabbit, but so horrible in its aspect that the unhappy beholder is deprived of the power of making his escape from its basilisk glance.

A Hottentot at the missionary institution of Bethelsdorp, when hunting in a thick wood in that neighbourhood, fancied he saw this dreadful animal, and died a few days afterwards in consequence of the fright. He gave one of the missionaries, from whom I heard the story, a minute account of its appearance. There is another fancy which is general among the Dutch, Hottentots, and Kaffres, — that people may be bewitched by burying knives, forks, spoons, or any other articles belonging to them, under the threshold of their doors.

I recollect a curious instance of this superstition in a Dutch family during my residence in the district of Uitenhage. The wife of the Dutchman had fallen ill of some disease which puzzled the native doctors and doctresses not a little. At last, an old Hottentot woman undertook to cure her: but, after exhausting

her store of medicines in vain, her skill began to be called in question. The cunning wretch, to save her credit, artfully contrived to bury some of the farmer's spoons under the threshold of the door, and boldly accused one of the female slaves of having bewitched her mistress. An immediate search was made under the door, and the spoons were found: this was proof positive, and the poor creature in vain protested her innocence.

Day after day the unfortunate woman was cruelly flogged, to compel her to restore her mistress to health. This had gone on for some weeks, when it accidentally came to the knowledge of a friend of mine, who reported the circumstance to the magistrate of the district, and the Dutchman was obliged to sell the slave woman, to put an end to the barbarities to which she was subjected; but nothing could persuade her master that she had not been the cause of his wife's sickness. This is one of the many instances of injustice and cruelty practised on domestic slaves, of the frequency of which we can form no conception unless we live among them for a considerable time, as they

generally submit passively to every injury rather than complain to a partial judge, who is usually a slaveholder himself, and naturally sympathizes with the master.

Without saying anything against the good intentions of individuals, it is vain to expect that anything like substantial justice will be done to this unhappy class by a set of magistrates who are or have been slaveholders themselves, and have moreover been brought up with all the usual prejudices against the coloured population.

In a country where the local magistrates are necessarily entrusted with great discretionary power, and where there are so few to check the abuse of authority, it is absolutely necessary that they should be selected from the more intelligent of our own countrymen, who are much less under the influence of such disqualifying feelings, and are not, like the Dutch, connected by relationship with the old colonists.

CHAPTER XI.

Decrease in the Numbers of the Hottentots.—Use of Spirituous Liquors.—Causes for a reduced Population.—Wild Beasts of South Africa.—Description of the Hyena—Mode of entrapping the Animal.—Cruel Amusement.—Habits of the Ant-Bear.—The Porcupine.—Wild Dogs.—Numbers of Jackals.—Depredations of the "Mousehond."—Nocturnal Visits of the Porcupine—Mode of hunting the Animal.

While treating of the Hottentots, it may not be considered irrelevant to advert to a fact which has often been noticed, though perhaps never sufficiently accounted for,—the decrease in their numbers.

The same circumstance has also been observed with regard to the aboriginal inhabitants of North America; and the causes commonly assigned for the depopulation are, the abuse of spirituous liquors, the smallpox, and other diseases imported by Europeans. It is obvious

that the first of these causes is the only one which can have an extensive or permanent operation; for in other countries experience proves that the productive powers of nature in the animal kingdom more than compensate for the havoc occasioned by disease and pestilence, which always observe certain limitations of time and place.

Another fact should be noticed,—that it is not occasional excesses in the use of spirituous liquors which tend materially to shorten life, but the constant and habitual abuse of them. Spirits are, no doubt, very cheap in some of our colonies; but it has never been satisfactorily explained how the natives, who have so little industry, can obtain a constant supply of an article which is not to be had for nothing. This supposition involves little less than a contradiction. It may be said that spirits have a more pernicious effect on the constitutions of people who have not been accustomed to them. This, I am aware, is a very general opinion; but, so far as my own observation has extended, I have commonly found the reverse to be the case.

If we examine into the many instances we see of habitual drunkenness in our own country, we shall find that the propensity has in most cases been acquired *after* the body and constitution have come to their full growth and vigour; and that those who have been addicted to drinking in extreme youth seldom continue the practice through life. Before the constitution is formed, it is materially weakened by sensual indulgences, and the individual becomes incapable of deriving constant gratification from such habits.

I have uniformly observed that the Hottentots suffer much less from the effects of any excess of this kind than Europeans. They have, indeed, a most inordinate craving for brandy, and are totally unable under any circumstances to resist the temptations it offers; but no person who has the least knowledge of the colony can suppose that they have frequent opportunities of drinking to an extent sufficient to injure their health, or to render them less prolific.*

* Some further remarks upon this subject, adapted rather for the consideration of the political economist than for the general reader, will be found in the Appendix.

Europeans have certainly enough to answer for already in their treatment of the aboriginal inhabitants of their colonies, without their being taxed with exterminating them by the introduction of ardent spirits. But I cannot think that population will not exceed the means of sustenance in any country, unless some unnatural means be resorted to, to keep it within certain limits, or pestilence from time to time reduce their increasing numbers.

It is evident that savage races, who subsist on game or on their flocks, must necessarily require an infinitely greater extent of the surface of the earth to enable them to procure food than people in a more civilized state, when every acre of ground is made productive by agriculture. This is the case of the savage races of Africa, who, from the continual increase of their population, are obliged to extend their boundaries from time to time by attacking and exterminating neighbouring tribes.

Such has always been their practice; and it will continue to be so until civilization enables them to procure additional subsistence by rendering their lands more productive in food for

man. And while this savage state continues, they must feel all the evils of over-population as much as any civilized country in Europe. In so far only as the European colonists restrict their means of procuring food by the destruction of game, can they be said to diminish their numbers, by driving them into the practice of unnatural modes of preventing the inconvenient increase of population.

Could civilization be made to keep pace with the conquests of Europeans, instead of being a scourge to the original races in our colonies, as at present, the settlers would be their greatest benefactors, by teaching them to render the earth productive, and to subsist in peace and plenty on a much more limited territory than they formerly required.

Much of what I have said on this subject may be applied to the state of the slaves in our West India colonies, and will, I have no doubt, tend to counteract the inferences drawn from the alleged or real decrease of the slave population in these countries. That cruelty to this unfortunate class has had this effect to a certain extent, is probable; but it is equally unjust and

uncharitable to lay the whole blame of their decrease on the slave-holders.

I am no advocate for slavery, which is indefensible on every principle; but I would wish to see something like fairness and candour on both sides of the question. When I come to speak of the frontier districts of the settlement, I shall have occasion to revert to the Hottentots, and to offer some observations on the progress of the missionaries in their work of conversion and civilization. I shall now proceed to describe the animals found in the district of Swellendam.

Many of the wild beasts which formerly frequented this part of the colony have either been extirpated, or have fled into the interior before the destructive weapons of the colonists, on account of the scarcity and small extent of the woods in this part of the country—particularly from the want of the mimosa thorns, on the roots of which they delight to feed. The elephant does not appear to have been originally found here. The names of some places, however, preserve the memory of the rhinoceros and the buffalo; as "Rhenoster Fontein," the

Rhinoceros Spring, and "Buffel Jaagt's Rivier," which last commemorates some buffalo-hunt of the first settlers. Both the rhinoceros and the buffalo have totally disappeared from the district of Swellendam.

There are still some leopards; but they are seldom seen, and are much reduced in number. The hyenas, or wolves, as they are called by the Dutch, seem to increase with the population; their long dismal howls are heard every night as they prowl about the country, and are answered by the troops of dogs at the farmhouses that join with them in full chorus. There are two kinds of this animal found in the district: one species conceal themselves through the day in caves and holes among the craggy summits of the mountains, and the other in holes in the earth near the coast. I have not seen either of the species above two or three times in the day-time during my long residence in the colony.

The hyenas, destructive as they are to cattle, horses, and sheep, are exceedingly cowardly towards man. They do not even venture to attack large cattle, except when they have a

decided advantage over them. Unless the cattle fly from them, they are not in much danger, particularly when several of them are together; for the hyenas are afraid of their horns, and never assail them but on the flank or rear; and even after they are severely bitten, large cattle or horses often make their escape from their huge jaws, which leave their marks ever afterwards. Horses generally run from them; but if they are shackled in the manner of the colony, (having their necks tied by a leathern thong to one leg,) finding that they have no chance of escape by flight, they turn round and face their enemy, when the dastardly hyena sheers off with a sulky growl. This is a most fortunate circumstance for the colonists, as they are often obliged, in travelling, to turn out their horses to graze through the night.

The hyenas in their predatory excursions are generally alone or in pairs. By the accounts of the old Hottentots, they seem to have been less in dread of man formerly, before fire-arms became common in this part of the colony. It is even said that they sometimes entered their huts and carried off their children. This I can rea-

dily believe, from the known boldness and ferocity of these animals near Port Natal, where the inhabitants live in great fear of them, and never venture to travel alone during the night.*

Hyenas are often hunted in the colony by tracking them to their dens in the mountains, and shooting them as they endeavour to make their escape. The colonists sometimes even catch them napping; and, while the foremost hunter enters their dark cave, the hyena continues glaring with affright at the torch which he carries in his left hand, while he delibe-

* Fire-arms have, indeed, wrought a great change in the character of many wild animals in Britain as well as in South Africa. A few years ago I visited the little island of Papa Westray in Orkney, where, on a small uninhabited islet adjoining, hundreds of seals were lying on the grass near the beach, which were so tame that they allowed us to come within forty paces of them before they attempted to move; and, when they at last took to their native element, they continued calmly looking at us with their heads above the water, only diving when we threw stones at them. This extreme tameness was simply owing to the proprietor never permitting a gun to be fired on the island. He caught great numbers of them for their skins and oil, by anchoring nets in the shallow water along the beach, in which they entangled themselves when they were driven into the water. He also got immense quantities of the eggs of gulls, and other sea birds, which were also exceedingly tame.

rately stabs it to the heart with a long knife. Many more are caught alive in traps, or wolf-houses, as they are called. These traps are generally constructed of wood, by fixing strong sticks in the ground, meeting at top like the roof of a house. They have either one or two doors at the ends, which, by means of a lever, are contrived to fall as soon as the animal seizes the bait, which is suspended in the inside. The hyena is exceedingly cunning and suspicious, particularly after an unsuccessful attempt to ensnare him; and it is therefore the better plan to have a door at each end of the trap, which gives him more confidence to enter. I have often known them go round and round a baited trap, and not venture within the doorway.

When a hyena is secured in this way, the Dutch colonists, to revenge themselves on the misdeeds of his species, indulge in a cruel sport at the expense of their captured enemy. They get hold of one of his hind legs, and, drawing it between the bars of his trap, cut a hole through the sinew above the joint, and fix a heavy waggon chain to it, and then raising the

door, turn him out and worry him with dogs, and stab him with bayonets and knives, until he is dead.

This savage and dastardly amusement would, I have no doubt, prove highly interesting to the cock-fighters of our own country; and as they profess to love the British amusement merely for the pleasure of betting, they might exercise their sagacity in nicely calculating the time and number of stabs requisite to terminate the hyena's existence.

These Cape wolves often carry away the bullocks' hides which are pinned out on the ground to dry, and, after devouring as much as they want of their tough prize, bury the remainder under the water in some rivulet. This manner of securing their plunder shows great sagacity, as in any other situation it could not escape the keen scent of other wild animals. They are frequently driven to great straits for want of food, and on these occasions devour grass, hair, and other indigestible substances. When the hyena is first roused by the hunters from his retreat in the rocks, he is exceedingly stiff and lazy, and it is some time before his

joints gain their suppleness, when he scampers over hill and dale with great speed. In the course of their nightly perambulations, they go over a very great extent of country,—I should suppose at least forty or fifty miles, and often much more.

The hyenas that retreat during the day to holes in the ground, seldom, if ever, excavate them for themselves, but profit by the labours of the ant-bears, which are much better furnished with strong claws for penetrating the indurated clay of a dry climate. The ant-bear, in the same manner, is often indebted to the porcupines for breaking the harder surface of the ground and tearing up the tough roots of grass, on which his claws, from their peculiar formation, could take but small effect.

When the hole is sufficiently enlarged by the hyena to form a roomy space suitable to its habits in the interior, the ant-bear is compelled to resign his domicile to the savage intruder, with whom he finds that he cannot associate on equal terms. But the porcupine, which is still more destructive to the gardens of the farmers than the hyena is to their flocks, forms

a little ante-chamber to himself in the side of the hole; and, protected by his prickly hide, is enabled to keep his ground, much in the same manner as a testy little man bristles up and retains his place in society in defiance of some gigantic bully who looks as if he could swallow him up at a mouthful.

I have read in the works of some traveller that the Cape wolf imitates the lowing of cattle to decoy them into his power. I never could perceive this resemblance myself, and I believe it only existed in their own imaginations; but if there is any, he is certainly eminently unsuccessful in the exercise of his oratorical powers, as the cattle instantly recognise his uncouth voice, and make off as he approaches, or prepare for resistance by throwing themselves into a solid mass with the calves and weaker cattle in the centre, and presenting an impenetrable barrier of huge horns towards their invader.

The farmers often teach their cattle to resist the attacks of the hyena by setting their dogs on them, and by imitating the howl of the animal; which, by eliciting their natural cou-

rage, and showing them the use of their horns, accustom them to defend themselves from their wily but cowardly enemy.

The only other animal destructive to the larger description of cattle to be found in this part of the colony is the wild dog.

There are two species of wild dogs in the colony. The larger, if not the smaller kind also, is now, I believe, considered by naturalists as a species of hyena. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the subject to give any opinion on the propriety of the place assigned to them, but there is a manifest difference in the habits of the hyenas and the wild dogs; as the former confine their depredations to the night-time, and the latter always hunt in packs during the day.

The wild dogs are most destructive to sheep and goats; but they sometimes kill cows and oxen. As the hyena generally assaults the larger cattle in the flank, where his huge jaws can best take effect, the wild dog constantly attacks them under the tail, and renews his efforts until he succeeds in tearing out their entrails. When a troop of the latter attack a

flock of sheep, and they see people coming to the rescue, they bite right and left among the flock in order to do as much damage as possible, in hopes that more will fall to their share afterwards. In hunting antelopes they spread themselves over the country and act in concert, relieving each other in the chase until they tire out their prey; thus making up by cunning for their want of speed.

The wild dog appears to me to form the intermediate link between the hyena and common dog. I have often seen them domesticated, but they never lose their destructive propensities. When tamed, they also breed with the dogs of the farmers, and produce a race of ill-looking mongrels which are very far from bearing a good character in the colony.

Jackals are exceedingly numerous in Swellendam and most of the other districts of the colony, and, like the hyenas, seem to increase with the population, particularly in the sheep countries. They are about the size of the common fox, which they greatly resemble in appearance. As soon as the sun goes down, several of them assemble and set up a squall resem-

bling a concert of cats, such as we are often serenaded with in the back-yards of a street in the metropolis, and which they continue at intervals throughout the night.

These jackals prey on young antelopes and sheep which happen to have been left out at night. I have never known them kill poultry, nor do they appear to resort to the finesse and cunning of the fox. They conceal themselves in holes in the ground, like the hyena, but are often seen in the daytime. I once found a litter of young ones, and kept one of them for several months. Though I confined him in a dark chamber for some time, he continued to set up his peculiar squall regularly every evening as the sun went down. In time, he became tolerably tame and very playful; but his temper was exceedingly irritable, as his sharp teeth often made me feel to my cost.

Among the many four-footed enemies the colonists are annoyed with, the "mousehond" is the most troublesome. This animal, which is of the weasel kind, is about three feet in length: it commits great havoc among the poultry every night if they are not well secured,

for its long thin body enables it to creep through a very small opening in the door or walls of a house; and it is much more destructive than the foxes of Europe. In the fields this little creature preys on rats, mice, birds, moles, &c. &c.

The most common kind of mousehond is of a light grey colour, and the skin has a strong odour resembling musk. Another species is grey with black spots, and has a bag under the tail containing a liquid of the same odour. There are also numbers of wild cats, which are nearly as destructive to poultry as the animals already mentioned.

As the farm stock of the colonists are exposed to the attacks of many wild animals, their gardens are no less liable to the nocturnal visits of the porcupines, which force their way through the thickest hedges, or undermine the earthen enclosures that surround them, making sad havoc among pumpkins, melons, potatoes, and Indian corn. We frequently hunted these animals with dogs in the moonlight nights, and they afforded excellent sport.

We were always armed on these occasions

with bayonets fixed on long sticks; and it required some quickness in the use of our weapons to prevent the animal from running against our legs with their sharp quills, which they have a trick of doing, and to avoid tumbling over them in the confusion, which would be attended with very disagreeable consequences. In flapping their quills, it often happens that some of them fly out with great force; which circumstance has given rise to the story of their darting them at their enemies.

On one occasion, I recollect one of our people getting wounded through the flesh of the leg by one of these strong spines, which are as sharp at the point as a needle. The poor dogs are generally the greatest sufferers in these porcupine hunts, often getting their mouths and heads stuck full of the quills in attempting to get hold of them. Experience, however, teaches them caution; and a knowing old dog will get his head under the porcupine, and, seizing him by the leg, throw him on his back, when he soon makes an end of him by biting him in the breast, where there are no quills, or at all events can hold him till one of the hunters comes up

with his spear. The flesh of a young porcupine is excellent eating, and very nutritious. The flavour is something between pork and fowl. To be cooked properly, it should be boiled first, and afterwards roasted. This is necessary to soften the thick gristly skin, which is the best part of the animal. The flesh of the porcupine is said to be used by the Italians as a stimulant; but never having tasted it myself, I cannot speak from experience as to the virtue of this kind of food.

CHAPTER XII.

Passion for Field-Sports in England.—Discontent of the Lower Classes.—Amusements of South Africa.—Resorts of the Wild Boar.—Mode of hunting the Animal.—Excellent Sport.—Excursions in quest of Wild Pigs.—Picture of a Dutch Wife.—An Avaricious Colonist—Proceedings of his Nephews.—Advantageous Traffic.—Successful Manœuvre.

Having described the most destructive quadrupeds in this part of the settlement, I shall now give the reader some account of the animals that contribute most to the delight of the colonists in hunting, which here constitutes their principal recreation.

Hunting and shooting in our own country are generally resorted to as mere amusements by people who have no regular employment; but the pleasure attending such diversions must, to every reflecting mind, be alloyed with a painful sense of the many valuable hours misspent

in a pursuit which can hardly be said to benefit themselves, or mankind.

It is, indeed, much to be lamented that the inordinate passion for field-sports in England which pervades a great proportion of the higher classes, should, instead of an agreeable relaxation, become a serious business of life, to the total neglect, in many instances, of its important occupations and duties; and that so many men of excellent abilities should sacrifice their talents, energies, and wealth, to a frivolous and too often vicious pursuit of mere pleasure.

Such is the contagious effect of fashion and example, that a man in easy circumstances, if he has courage to admit that he takes little pleasure in such amusements, is looked upon with a species of contempt by others of the same class in society. This is one of the moral diseases of England which has grown out of the unequal division of property. While the agricultural population are groaning under hopeless poverty, we see very many of the great landholders spending their time between the dissipation of the metropolis, supporting by their extravagance a still more vicious population,

and the frivolous though less dissolute amusements of the country. Need we, therefore, wonder at the discontent of the lower classes in Great Britain, or the unpopularity of certain among the aristocracy?

The diversions of South Africa are free from many of these objections. Very few of the colonists are in such circumstances, or can find leisure from their more important avocations, to indulge in any amusements to an undue degree. Their farms require constant personal superintendence: and when they do indulge in the favourite sports of the country, it is at times when they have no more useful occupations. In hunting the wild animals they feel that they are usefully employed, either in ridding the earth of dangerous and destructive creatures, or in providing food for their families, and thus economizing their other means of support. I would not exchange the pleasure of destroying a leopard, hyena, or poisonous snake, for all the harmless game that Britain contains, —because I feel that while I gratify that innate destructive propensity which is natural to man, I free my neighbours from a dangerous animal.

In the woody ravines in the mountains of Swellendam there are many wild boars, which generally keep close in the jungles during the day, but at night descend to the valleys, and do no small damage to the Indian corn and vegetables of the farmers when they can get at them. My brother's garden, which was in the bottom of one of these woody ravines, was one of their favourite resorts; and here I often used to lie in wait for them with my gun behind one of the trees, taking care to observe the direction of the wind: for, like all the other wild animals, their sense of smell is exceedingly acute, and if one happens to be to windward of them, they instantly make off.

I was not often successful in this mode of making war upon them, from the difficulty of taking a good aim at night; and unless they are mortally wounded by the first discharge, they either get clear off to the bushes, or are too dangerous to approach in the dark. These creatures have very large tusks, with which they can break a man's leg at a stroke. They are generally hunted in the daytime with dogs, and afford a most excellent and exciting sport, in which

there is just danger enough to render it highly interesting, and to make the hunters keep on the alert.

Soon after my arrival at Groot Vaders Bosch, we had an excellent hunt of this animal. The best qualities a dog can have for boar-hunting are, a good nose, and strong jaws to keep a firm hold of the animal's ear to enable the hunters to approach with less risk.

My brother had a common mongrel which was famed in the vicinity for these useful qualities; and the Dutchmen near us often proposed hunting-parties, when our dog had ample opportunities of showing his courage and address.

One day, about a dozen of our neighbours assembled at our house with a number of dogs of all colours and sizes, and, after being refreshed with a "soupie," or dram of raw Cape brandy, which they prefer to every other liquor, we all proceeded, some mounted and others on foot, to beat the bushes along the margin of a little stream near the house, where the fresh tracks of a wild boar had been seen in the morning.

I was a little out of humour with our Dutch

friends, one of whom had dexterously purloined a leathern bag I had just manufactured for the occasion to hold my rifle balls. Though I had a pretty good guess who was the thief, I did not wish to destroy the harmony of the party by demanding restitution; and our subsequent sport perfectly restored my equanimity.

The dogs soon roused a huge boar from his lair among the thick bushes on the banks of the rivulet, and he made a violent rush through the midst of the hunters with all the yelping crew at his heels. He soon gained a little open plain at the base of the mountains, and ran with such speed that none of the dogs could overtake him. Some of us fired at him without effect; but, as he ascended a sloping path in the face of the mountain, his speed began to slacken, and we were in hopes that he would soon be brought to bay. We all followed pell-mell as fast as our horses or legs could carry us.

The dogs had by this time overtaken the boar, who made a desperate resistance, striking right and left with his tusks among his assailants, and succeeded in disabling or scaring some

of the boldest among them who attempted to seize him by the ears.

The Dutchmen shouted and swore the most uncouth left-handed oaths to encourage their dismayed hounds to renew the combat; but without effect. The grizzly monster, taking advantage of the short truce, continued his flight. By this time, however, he was a good deal exhausted with his exertions in the steep ascent, and was glad to take shelter in a clump of thick brushwood, where we overtook him and renewed the fight immediately, that he might get no time to recover his strength. As his legs failed him, his ferocity increased; and not one of our dogs could keep his hold. They still, however, gave him no breathing time; and we shot at him whenever he could be seen among the bushes. He could not, however, be fired at in his present situation without great risk of killing some of the dogs that surrounded him on all sides.

The Dutchmen, who pique themselves exceedingly on their shooting, never discharged their guns without swearing that they hit him. One declared he had shot him through the left

ear; another regretted that he had not taken his aim an inch or two farther to the right hand; a third cursed his gun for hanging fire. For my own part, I continued firing as well as I could, never expecting to get any chance among such admirable marksmen, as in my simplicity I then deemed them; and who, to believe their own accounts, could hear the balls strike the boar's skin at every shot.

My brother's dog, on whose courage so much reliance was placed, had made many attempts to seize the enraged animal by the ear; but he shook him off with ease, each time retreating backwards into the thickest part of the bushes, but still boldly facing his foes.

We at last succeeded in driving him from his hold, when he again set off at full speed down the path by which he had ascended. He returned to the margin of the rivulet where we had first started him; and the dogs again brought him to bay in a little bushy flat, surrounded by the high banks of the stream, on which we took up our stand and had a fine view of the sport.

The poor animal was now much exhausted,

and seemed to feel that his life was drawing to a close. Planting himself against a thick bush, he continued boldly to face his pursuers, sending the foremost of the dogs yelping away with a dreadful gash in his side from a stroke of his huge tusk. At length, quitting his position, he slowly ascended the bank at the point where my brother had taken his stand, but who could not see for the bushes. I called out, to make him aware of the animal's approach. As soon as he saw him emerge from the bushes, he levelled his rifle, and allowing the creature to come within a few yards of the edge of the bank, shot him through the shoulder and heart.

The boar rolled down to the bottom of the bank, where we cut off his head, which fell to my brother's share, according to the common usage in such cases. On examining the carcass, to my astonishment we found that the beast had received only one wound, to the great mortification of the Dutchmen, who could not conceal their chagrin at being outdone by a "stomme Englesman."

This was one of the strongest boars I have

ever seen; and it seldom happens that they afford such good sport. In most cases, the dogs soon secure them by the ears, so that the hunters can come up and shoot them at once, or disable them by hamstringing or stabbing them with a long knife without any considerable danger.

The Dutch have another curious mode of putting an end to them when they are not provided with a knife. As soon as the animal is secured between a couple of dogs, they cautiously approach him in the rear, and, seizing one of the hind legs to prevent him from turning, thrust an iron ramrod by main force through his body. This method is frequently resorted to merely to save a charge of powder and ball; for the careful Batavians calculate all expenses to the greatest nicety, never losing sight of their habitual economy.

When I could not make a party among our neighbours, I often went alone with my dogs in search of the wild pigs, following some of the long woody ravines in the face of the mountains.

During these solitary excursions I sometimes

called at the house of a Prussian settler, who had married a Cape-Dutch wife, the very opposite of everything elegant, feminine, or modest: she was, in fact, a sort of man-woman, with sinewy arms and a hard-featured countenance, which was moreover well furnished with a bristly beard. She was not, however, altogether devoid of the milk of human kindness; and, unamiable as she was in most respects, her hospitality and civility made some amends for her defects of character.

Our conversation often turned on hunting, in which she took great interest; and she related, with infinite delight, her feats in destroying the wild animals that daily and nightly infested her garden. One moonlight evening, she told me, when her husband was from home, her dogs had seized a wild pig that was committing sad ravages among her Indian corn and pumpkins. She no sooner heard the screams of the animal, than she rushed to the scene of action armed with a long knife. When she came to the spot, she found her enemy secured by the ears between two of the dogs, and making the glen resound with his cries. With-

out stopping to reflect on her danger, she instantly sprang on the captive, and plunged the blade of the knife in his heart's blood.

As she told her story, she flourished the knife in her hand in the most heroic manner, adapting the action to the word. I could not help recoiling from her during this recital with a mixed feeling of horror and fear, as if she would have served me as she did the pig, on the slightest provocation.

The reader will naturally wish to know what manner of being the husband of this virago might be. Probably he will picture him in his mind's eye as a weak, timid, pale-faced, tailor-looking man, yielding implicit obedience to his *stronger* half. Heyn Mülder, or, as he was commonly called, Old Heyn, was not a person of this description: he stood six feet high, and was extremely athletic. Old Heyn had never known his master in man or woman: he was hard and unyielding in his nature, cunning and tyrannical to his dependants.

The ruling passion of Heyn and his sleeping partner was avarice; every feeling was made to yield to this all-absorbing principle, and the

rest of mankind were only regarded by them both as fit subjects for the exercise of this propensity. A similarity of disposition, however, does not always secure tranquillity in the marriage state, where one of the parties must always submit; and old Heyn's spouse could not at all times bring her manly disposition to yield due obedience to the stern dictates of her husband.

On these occasions, Heyn never failed to make use of the all-persuasive powers of a trusty staff, which he always carried in his hand to quicken the movements of his refractory Hottentots.

One day, I surprised the couple in one of their toughest quarrels. Old Heyn was standing before the door brandishing his sapling over his head, while the gentle dame was laughing and taunting him from the branches of a tree in front of the house, whither she had fled for security.

As I approached, old Heyn put aside his wrath and came to greet me, observing, that "these d——d obstinate wives must be taught

to know their master." He then turned towards his offending fair one, who was now descending from her perch, and told her that the tree would not serve her turn another time, for he would cut it down rather than she should get the better of him, when he would pay her off all old scores.

The wife received this declaration with a laugh of scorn, telling him that she knew the old "schelm" too well to believe that he would sacrifice one of his best orange-trees on so slight a provocation.

The situation this loving couple had selected for their residence, besides commanding a fine spring to water their garden, was well suited to their unsocial and predatory dispositions: it lay in a sequestered nook between the mountains, and was barely accessible to wheel-carriages by a steep and rugged path, up which none but Heyn's oxen could draw a waggon. He had originally come out to the colony as a servant to the Dutch East India Company, and had for many years been employed in felling timber for their use in this

wild ravine, where he afterwards took up his abode when the term of his servitude had expired.

Like his natural brethren and neighbours, the hyenas, old Mülder was feared and hated by the Dutch colonists, who had often felt the strength of his arm and superior cunning, and besides regarded him as an interloper among them. He was universally denominated a "schelm," or rogue, which in Cape-Dutch phraseology is only a *comparative* term, and simply means that the old fox not only would not allow *himself* to be cheated, but took an active part in cheating his neighbours on all occasions.

As Heyn's years increased, he gradually began to be sensible of his lone and friendless condition, and often lamented to my brother that after the death of his wife and himself all his property, which had cost him so much toil to acquire, would go to the Government. He often also spoke of two nephews he had in Prussia, whom he wished to come out to the colony to assist him in his old age, and to inherit his property. Long, however, did his inclina-

tion contend with his avarice before he could summon resolution to part with a portion of his money to pay the expenses of the passage, to enable the young men to avail themselves of his kind intentions. The crafty old Heyn, who had much exaggerated his wealth to induce his nephews to emigrate at their own expense, never dreamed that the young blades might have a spice of his own character: the young men thinking, that if their uncle was really so wealthy as he represented himself, he might easily advance the necessary funds; and they steadily pleaded poverty as the only thing which kept them from joining their "dear uncle."

At an unlucky moment, Heyn actually put his hand in his pocket, and the nephews made their appearance in the colony. For a few months, all parties were pleased; old Mülder looked several years younger, and the youths were elated with their prospects: but the ruling passion and inveterate habits were not thus suddenly to be overcome. Heyn could not help seeing that he had now acquired a couple of domestic slaves bound to him by the strongest

of all ties — worldly interest: his avarice soon returned, and, while he exacted more and more labour from his expectant relatives, his wife gradually reduced the quality of their fare. For a time, they bore all this patiently; but, finding that their "dear uncle" was not likely to die so soon as they expected, their fierce northern blood at last rose up, and they made the country resound with their injuries.

Old Heyn discovered, when it was too late, that he had overbent the bow. It was now out of his power to retrace his steps; and the young men soon found advisers to put them on a plan of being revenged on the common enemy.

The Dutch laws in those days, if they might be made an engine of oppression against the poor and the helpless, were no less capable of being turned against the wealthy with equal effect. Lawyers must be paid by *somebody*: the young men were supposed to possess nothing, and old Heyn was believed to be rich. The nephews prosecuted him for wages: Heyn resisted, and had to pay the wages and the law expenses of a protracted suit, and was ruined.

His wealth, which, like a true worldling, he had exaggerated to increase his power, was very small; and, as often happens with men who think that cunning is wisdom, the very engine which he had used against others was at last turned against himself with unerring effect —*sic transit gloria mundi!*

Old Heyn Mülder, who possessed talents, energy and industry, and wanted only honesty and benevolence to make him a better and more fortunate man, was often to be seen hard at work in the fields, clad in leather trousers and a long slop frock, in the midst of his people, flinging his long staff at his Hottentots or oxen indifferently, as they incurred his indignation. He had always a barrel of Cape brandy in his house, which he retailed to the Hottentots, and managed to keep them constantly in his debt; by which means he was never without servants to assist him in his labours at the lowest wages. He often offered his estate for sale, but demanded an exorbitant price, insinuating at the same time that it possessed some mine which would realize a rapid fortune to the purchaser. This story was half

believed by his Dutch neighbours, who could not conceive how he had accumulated so much property from such small beginnings.

Heyn and his wife had often sent my brother little "presents," as they called them, of eggs and sundry other articles of small value, which he had repaid three-fold in brandy, wine, and European goods. Mülder, however, finding, when my brother was about to quit the district of Swellendam, that this advantageous traffic must cease, sent in a long account of the articles furnished, which amounted to a considerable sum, making no deduction for what he had received in return.

Unwilling to be imposed on in this impudent manner, the latter fell on a plan to meet the old fox's unconscionable demand. Finding that our neighbour had been in the habit of making use of an old dung-heap at the extremity of his estate which my brother had no occasion for, he made one of his people keep an account of the number of waggon-loads he carried away, and then sent him in a counter-claim, amounting to much more than the original demand.

This manœuvre completely established my brother's character among the neighbours as a man possessing *useful* talents; and even Heyn Mülder himself fairly admitted that he was outdone by the Englishman in his own craft.

CHAPTER XIII.

Different Species of Antelopes.—The "Bonte-bock," or Spotted Buck—Hunting the Animal prohibited.—Habits of the Rhee-bock—Mode of approaching them.—Shooting the "Duiker," or Diver.—Chase of the Grys-bock described.—Beauty of the Eyes of the Gazelle.—The Klip-springer.—An aged Hottentot.—Herds of Springbocks.—On the Instinct of the Antelope.—Distribution of the Brute Creation over the Earth.—On different Varieties of Animals.—Suppositions respecting the Flood.—Changes in the Earth's Surface.—Quadrupeds of New Holland.—Object of the Holy Scriptures.

THERE are several species of antelopes in the district of Swellendam. They all differ more or less in their natural habits, as well as in their external appearance: some are migratory—others are found only in certain situations in most of the different districts, or never quit some particular part of the colony.

The bonte-bock is one of the largest of the antelopes about Swellendam; but their numbers

are now reduced to a few herds which inhabit a small tract of country between the mountains and the sea-coast, and included between two streams, the Breede and the Duivenhoek rivers, as they are called, and are never found in any other part of the colony.

There is, indeed, another kind of antelope known by the name of bonte-bock, or spotted buck, on the frontiers of the settlement; but it is of a totally distinct species. The bonte-bocks feed together in herds of from ten to twenty in number. They are about three feet and a half in height. Their usual pace is a graceful canter, and they are not so difficult to approach as many of the other species. I can say little of the hunting of this animal, it having been forbidden by the Government under a severe penalty.

Such prohibitions, with the greater part of the colonists, only give an additional zest to the amusement, and act in a contrary manner to what was intended; as any man who should give information against a neighbour, would be regarded as a common enemy by the rest of the colonists. To use a vulgar phrase,

Government, like an individual, "should not show its teeth until it is ready to bite."

Much as it may be desired to prevent the total extinction of this rare animal, it may be a question whether, in a matter that in itself involves no moral turpitude and yields no revenue, any government can be justified in attaching a penalty to the breach of an arbitrary enactment, which can only be enforced through the medium of base informers, and tend to create dissension and distrust among the inhabitants.

The rhee-bock antelopes, like the bonte-bocks, are only found in the open country, and never enter the woods even when pursued. They are also gregarious, and are very numerous in most parts of the colony. They are exceedingly shy, and possess a quick eye and keen scent; so that it is difficult to get within shot of them. Various devices are used for this purpose, which I often had recourse to in hunting them.

The country between the mountains and the sea is composed of a series of rounded hills, divided by deep ravines with stagnant pools of

water in them, supplied by periodical streams in the rainy season.

In crossing the tops of these hills, I often surprised a troop of rhee-bocks grazing quietly below me. The sentinel generally gave the alarm to the rest of the herd by a sharp snort, when they would all look up; and, if I were not too near, they would continue regarding me for a length of time, irresolute how to act on the occasion.

Finding it would be in vain to attempt approaching them, I generally took off my jacket and hung it up on a stick fixed in the ground to engage their attention, while I cautiously stole round behind, keeping to windward of them, and availing myself of any bushes or ant-hills in my way. In this manner, I often managed to get within rifle-shot without being perceived.

The rhee-bock is not so large as the bonte-bock, but is lighter made and much swifter.

The "duiker," or diver, is a smaller species of antelope common in many parts of the country. They are always found singly, or in pairs, couching in or grazing near low bushes or brush-

wood. When roused, they fly straight forward, leaping and plunging among the bushes with wonderful agility, until they can gain a more secure shelter.

They afford excellent diversion; but the sportsman requires a quick eye to catch sight of them as they appear from time to time above the bushes. In hunting them, the colonists use either large shot or ball, but commonly the former. The best plan, however, is to have a double gun, one barrel loaded with shot, and the other with ball; which gives the huntsman a double chance, as he can get another long shot in the event of his first charge not taking effect.

There are two kinds of antelopes called steen-bocks;—the "flak" steen-bock, and the "grys" steen-bock. The habits of the former are nearly similar to those of the duiker. The grys steen-bock shows great cunning in avoiding the scent of the dogs. I have often watched their manœuvres, when they were pursued by my dogs, from the steep side of the mountain, which afforded me a fine bird's-eye view of their doublings, turnings, and wiles.

The valley below me, as well as the base of the mountains, was plentifully sprinkled with bushes and luxuriant brushwood. During the chase, the little grys-bock would return again and again on his track,—then turn sharply round a corner of the bushes and dart aside into some narrow foot-path, where he would stand still for a moment to listen for the dogs. When he found that his retreat was discovered, he would start off; and, as a last resource, would sometimes make a desperate spring into the middle of a thick clump of bushes, and completely baffle his pursuers.

The plaintive cries of the poor grys-bock, when it was caught by the dogs, so nearly resembled those of a child, and the animal seemed so keenly alive to its hapless situation, that this circumstance diminished my pleasure in the chase of it.

The beauty of the eyes of the gazelle, or antelope, is often alluded to in eastern poetry; and to none of the various species does the remark apply better than to the grys-bock. Its eyes have an indescribable expression of infantine simplicity, innocence, and helplessness, that

makes the sportsman inwardly curse his barbarity even in the moment of success. The grysbock is always found in the bushes, rarely quitting his shelter to any distance.

The "klip-springer," or rock-springer, is an antelope of habits totally distinct from the other species. It is only to be seen among the precipitous rocks and craggy summits of the mountains, bounding from shelf to shelf, or along some narrow projection in the face of the precipice where no dog would dare to follow it.

I believe these are all the species of antelopes to be found in the district of Swellendam at the present time; but, from the accounts of the older settlers and Hottentots, it appears that several other kinds have become totally extinct in this part of the colony, or have changed their abode.

I recollect meeting with an aged Hottentot, who, from his perfect recollection of the different succeeding governors of the colony, could not be less than a hundred and thirty years of age. He remembered the whole country abounding with various kinds of antelopes, the

names of which only are now known to the Dutch.

The spring-bocks were then frequently to be seen in this district. They are still found in large herds near the frontiers of the colony, and in the remote interior, where they wander in search of pasture and water over many hundred miles of country, and are often very destructive to the crops of the inhabitants, as they can leap with ease over the highest fences.

Several other species of antelopes, which, like the spring-bocks, are migratory, are to be found in other parts of the colony; but all the kinds I have enumerated as inhabiting the district of Swellendam never change their abode, but constantly return to their particular haunts after they have been chased or fired at.

It is curious to observe so striking a variety in the habits of animals that so nearly resemble each other in general appearance. This curious fact strongly militates against the supposition of their being all sprung from a common stock.

We can conceive that the colour, size, and even the shape of animals, may be altered by the peculiar circumstances of climate or locali-

ties; but we cannot so easily imagine that their natural dispositions—or instincts, as they are commonly called—can undergo a corresponding modification, when they are not compelled to change their habits. It may indeed be said with truth, that much of what is frequently considered as mere instinct in animals, is the result of a process of reasoning in a more limited degree than in man, and that they naturally resort to such expedients as are best calculated for self-preservation and the continuation of their species which circumstances may render necessary.

Observation, however, shows that the different species of antelopes have certain original habits from which they never deviate in the smallest degree, even when they are in immediate danger. Thus the rhee-bock, spring-bock, and many other antelopes, will never enter a wood or take refuge in the precipices when they are closely pursued by dogs. In the same manner several kinds of wood-antelopes never quit their natural haunts, or instantly fly to them when they are molested. All these different species constantly graze apart from

the other kinds, and have never been known to intermix their breed.

When we reflect on the distribution of the brute creation over the surface of the earth, we cannot help perceiving the peculiar adaptation of each species to the climates and countries they inhabit. Without questioning for a moment the truth of the Sacred Writings, we may be allowed to doubt whether we are to understand from them that a male and female of all the land animals now existing in every part of the earth were inclosed within the Ark.

Could we suppose that all the different species and varieties of animals of the same general classes have been produced since that period by accidental circumstances, the matter would in some measure be determined. This is a point, indeed, which is surrounded with difficulties; and it is only by experiment that we can arrive at just conclusions on the subject.

It would tend materially to clear up this obscure question, if naturalists could ascertain how far the different species of animals are

capable of producing new varieties by intermixture of the various breeds, and whether the creatures thus produced are able to continue their species.

The several kinds of antelopes found in Africa differ still more from each other in external appearance than do the various animals of the horse kind,—such as the ass, quagga, and zebra; and we know that the mule, produced between the horse and ass, is not capable of extending its species. It is therefore probable that this would also be the case with regard to the different species of antelopes: we may at least conclude so until the contrary is proved by experience.

During the many ages that elapsed from the Creation until the Flood, the different animals had certainly sufficient time to spread themselves to the utmost bounds of the earth, and to take up their abode in situations best adapted to their natural habits. Unless we suppose that the extent of the known world was then extremely limited, nothing short of an absolute miracle could have assembled all these animals: it still would be inconceivable

how room could be found for them in an ark of the dimensions given in the Mosaic account. It seems more rational to conclude that the Flood extended only to that portion of the earth which was already inhabited by mankind; and there is nothing in Scripture, when all circumstances are considered, to lead us to believe that it extended over the whole surface of the earth.*

Though geological observations show that great revolutions have taken place in the earth's surface, and that it has at some former period been covered by the ocean, it does not therefore necessarily follow that the whole earth has been inundated at the same time. On the contrary, it would rather appear that there have been several floods, which may have been occasioned either by a depression of the land or by an elevation of the waters.

The existence of various animals in New

* The author is in error. We find in *Genesis* that all the hills and mountains that were under the whole heavens were covered, the waters having risen fifteen cubits, or upwards of twenty-six feet, above the highest of them. This is an incontestable proof of the universality of the Deluge.—EDITOR.

Holland and in America which are found in no other part of the world, seems to prove that Noah's flood was not general: were this flood universal, we might naturally expect to find some of these animals in Europe or on the continent of Asia. It appears, therefore, much more probable that all animals were originally created, and at once placed in the regions and situations best adapted to their peculiar nature and habits.

The striking peculiarities observable in most of the quadrupeds of New Holland in particular, show clearly that it has been for many ages totally disconnected with the Asiatic continent; and to account for their being found in that portion of the world and in no other, two suppositions are necessary—either that they were originally placed in their present situations, or that New Holland was formerly joined to the continent of Asia, and that these animals found their way thither by land. Should we give the preference to the latter idea, and conclude that the races of those animals which are now peculiar to New Holland have become ex-

tinct in Asia, another question naturally occurs —how it happens that many other animals which still remain on the continent of Asia, and which are common to similar climates, are not to be found in that island? After considering these circumstances, we are irresistibly led to embrace the former supposition—namely, that these animals were originally created where they are still in existence.

In reasoning on the facts mentioned in Scripture, we should never lose sight of the time when and the people for whom it was written. Were we to take every statement in the literal sense, we should be led into a hundred errors which the increased knowledge of modern times enables us to avoid. The Bible does not profess to communicate scientific knowledge to men, but to show them the goodness and power of the Deity, and to supply them with a pure code of religion and morality; and it is therefore conceived in the language best adapted for general comprehension. When we read of the sun standing still, we are sufficiently warranted in concluding that it was not the sun, but the

earth which became stationary for a certain time, without for a moment doubting the truth of the scriptural account of the fact.

In the same manner, we can found no geological theories on the Mosaic description of the Deluge, and of the means taken by the Deity to destroy the human race. Language cannot be antecedent to ideas, which it was invented to represent; and even supposing that the inspired writers were themselves acquainted with the facts brought to light by the philosophers of subsequent ages — which we have no good reason to believe they were— they could only make use of the language already invented to express those ideas which preceded it, and which were commonly received by mankind at the time they wrote.

CHAPTER XIV.

Different Races of Men.—Diffusion of the Human Race over the Earth.—The Savage and the Civilized Man.—Progress of Civilization.—On the various Complexions of the different Races of Mankind.—Fair Tribe of Hottentots.—Peculiarities of Formation.—Causes of superior Stature.—Disgraceful Mode of Reasoning.

Many people entertain doubts whether the different races of mankind could have sprung from the same common ancestors; but it is not my intention to extend to mankind the arguments which I have adduced to prove that the brute creation have not all drawn their origin from the same country.

The various races of man have none of those differences of habit or external formation which can authorize such a supposition. There is, indeed, a variety of complexion to be observed in different latitudes; but we know that many of the inferior animals undergo a change

of colour from particular circumstances. Many birds, for instance, acquire a different and more varied plumage when they are domesticated.

In investigating this obscure subject, we should bear in mind the very different situation assigned to man and the lower animals in the scale of creation. Brutes have been supplied by the Deity with a very limited portion of intelligence, which is only capable of extension so far as they may be rendered serviceable to the wants of the human race. Man, on the contrary, is an animal immediately and peculiarly destined for the service of his Creator, and capable of high moral and intellectual attainments.

Without intercourse with the rest of his species, man remains stationary with regard to improvement, or degenerates into the condition of the brutes. It is therefore evident that no apparent object could be served by limiting the creation of the lower animals to a particular part of the earth; but that it was absolutely necessary for their advancement that mankind should be propagated from one common centre, from whence they might receive the benefits of civilization and instruction.

No situation could be better selected for these important purposes than the country where our first parents are supposed to have been placed by the Deity. The Garden of Eden may be considered as the centre or heart of the world, from whence the blood of life was propelled to the farthest ramifications of mankind, and from whence all knowledge requisite to the well-being of mankind was originally derived.

It is impossible to contemplate without admiration the means by which the Supreme Being has spread the human race over the surface of the earth, so that no portion of the habitable globe is left entirely unoccupied by man.

As the countries near the common centre become more densely peopled, the inhabitants would naturally have recourse to greater industry and contrivance to enable them to subsist, and civilization would follow as a matter of course: but as soon as men began to find that the advantages of this condensed and more civilized state of society were counterbalanced by its evils, in the difficulty of procuring a subsistence, they would be induced to emigrate to

unoccupied tracts of country around them, where less labour would be required, and where they would enjoy greater liberty of action. They would then of course gradually relapse into a state of barbarism in a greater or lesser degree, in proportion to their distance from the common centre.

As mankind require a greater extent of country to procure subsistence when in a savage state than when they are civilized, it necessarily follows that barbarians will overspread the surface of the earth in a shorter space of time than civilized men. It is thus that Providence has ordained that savages should spread the human race over every portion of the globe; but it was not therefore intended that they should continue in barbarism and ignorance.

That the gradual condensing of the population will in time lead to a considerable degree of civilization and knowledge among nations which have no intercourse with others more improved than themselves, there can be little doubt; but a direct or indirect communication with the parent race is absolutely requisite to

bring them to the highest state of moral and intellectual excellence of which mankind is capable. Thus, in Europe, civilization has always been extended from one country to another, and it certainly originated in the East.

Egypt was indebted for the first germs of its improvement to Judea, Greece to Egypt, Italy to Greece, and so on. In the present day it is to be hoped that such measures will be taken as will tend to improve the condition of the original inhabitants of the European colonies. Hitherto, in most instances, the manner in which these ancient races have been treated by European nations has had a directly contrary tendency; and, unless the present system be altered, instead of furthering the decrees of Providence in the preservation and improvement of these races, their dominion will prove a curse, and not a benefit to them.

Many arguments, founded on the different complexions of the various races of man, have been adduced to prove that they are not all sprung from a common stock. We are told that people of a fair complexion are often found in the warmer regions of the earth. This, how-

ever, it must be allowed, is an exception to the general rule, and should not, therefore, be taken as an argument in favour of the negative position while it may be accounted for by other causes.

It often happens that very considerable modifications of climate are produced by different elevations in territories under the same latitude, which in a great measure will account for the variations in the complexion of the inhabitants. On the other hand, every candid observer must admit that in most cases we find the tropical regions inhabited by blacks, and the more temperate climates by fair races.

It is indeed true that we sometimes find a fair race in a tropical climate, and a dark race in one more temperate; but it should be remembered that savage and barbarous tribes frequently change their abode by occupying the countries of the people they have conquered or exterminated. Thus, in the northern parts of the continent of Africa, the original negro inhabitants have been subdued, supplanted, or exterminated by the Moors, a comparatively fair race; while, in Southern Africa, the swarthy

Kaffres have driven the copper-coloured Hottentots before them, and occupied a large portion of their northern territories.

The language, manners, and external appearance of these neighbouring races are totally distinct from each other; and we can still easily determine the former extent of the Hottentot country by the names of the rivers and other natural objects which, in many instances, the Kaffre tribes still retain.

One circumstance regarding the Hottentots is remarkable; namely—that the Bosjesman Hottentots, who inhabit a more elevated and colder tract of country in the interior, are much fairer than the Hottentots of the colony, though there can be no doubt of their common origin, as their language and features are nearly similar.

It is probable that a residence of many ages is required to effect these changes in the complexion of the different races of mankind. It would take many ages, no doubt, to convert the fairer of our European races to the complexion of the negro; but if we suppose, which is by no means unlikely, that our first parents were of an intermediate complexion, like the

Moors, we can more easily conceive the possibility of all the gradations of colour being produced by the gradual influence of climate.

The fairness of the Hottentots at the more temperate extremity of Africa, where there could be no intercourse with Europeans, appears to be the most convincing proof that the peculiarities of complexion are merely the effect of climate. Had their features borne any resemblance to those of the European, the force of this argument would have been much weakened; but, on the contrary, they have the flat nose and woolly hair of the negro in a still greater degree, and speak a language totally distinct from that of any other known race in the world.

If the features of the Hottentots bear any affinity to those of any other races, it is only to such as they could not with any degree of probability be supposed to have had any intercourse with. They certainly, in some particulars, resemble the Chinese and Tartars; but no nations could be selected with whom the Hottentots at the extremity of Africa are less likely to have held any communication.

The peculiarities of formation observable in the different races of mankind may, at first sight, seem to offer a stronger argument against their common origin than the differences arising from complexion; but, if we reflect on the subject, the inferences drawn from such observations will not appear to be well founded. We every day have occasion to observe, on a more limited scale, peculiarities of features and complexion in particular families and individuals; but we never question the possibility of such families or individuals being the offspring of the same common parents from whom we ourselves are descended. We also notice that the different European nations are distinguished by certain characteristics. Thus, if we adopt this argument in respect to the negroes, we are compelled to admit that the various nations of Europe also are originally sprung from different parents.

If this argument be good for anything in one case, it is equally so in the other; and we are led to form conclusions so sweeping and general, that they extend far beyond the limits of probability. On the other hand, it is not diffi-

cult to imagine the modes by which national peculiarities in bodily formation may be produced. For instance, if a man and his wife who were remarkable for some singularity of conformation—such as a flat nose or thick lips—were to settle in some uninhabited region, might we not naturally expect that their posterity would possess the same peculiarities in at least an equal degree with their progenitors?

Judging from analogy, we may venture to assert that a family thus isolated from the rest of their species would degenerate when placed in climates or circumstances unfavourable to the perfection of their bodily proportions.

There can be no doubt that the stature of men depends, in a great measure, on the quantity or quality of the nutriment they have been accustomed to receive, particularly during the period of their growth; in the same manner as we observe that domesticated cattle are large or stunted in proportion to their pasturage—whether rich or poor, abundant or scanty.

We generally find that the children of settlers in our different colonies are taller and better proportioned than their parents; simply because they receive a proper quantity of nourishment with moderate bodily exertion during their growth. The same causes account for the superiority of stature observable in the higher ranks in our own country, where the lower classes have dwindled in size on account of hard labour and insufficiency of food in their childhood.

If the size of men depends upon their food and habits,—which we can hardly doubt,—we may naturally expect that their conformation may be no less affected by peculiarities in their mode of life. When all these circumstances are duly considered, and allowance is made for the probable effects of climate on the human constitution,—and also when the varieties produced by similar causes in the brute creation are observed,—the diversity in the colour and formation of the different families of mankind will in a great measure cease to be a subject of wonder, and we shall be more inclined to

regard our swarthy brethren with that respect and humanity of which ignorance and prejudice have so long and so unjustly deprived them.

Every generous mind must feel indignant at the heartless and ignorant assertion which we hear daily from many of our countrymen, that the coloured and negro races of mankind are naturally inferior to the whites.

They tell us that the negroes of Africa have never been civilized, and therefore infer that they are not susceptible of becoming so! This mode of reasoning is not more just than if we were to conclude that the Hottentots are incapable of improvement because they inhabit that point of Africa which is farthest removed from Egypt, and the other countries where civilization first commenced.

Such arguments are disgraceful to intellectual beings, and are the strongest proofs of a lamentable defect in the reasoning faculties of those who make use of them.

They forget that the ancient Britons were once savages, and were not civilized until after

the lapse of many ages of barbarism. If such opinions do not proceed from gross ignorance and prejudice, they can only owe their origin to the base sophistry of self-interest, and should be held in contempt and abhorrence by all men who are actuated by benevolent feelings towards the human race.

CHAPTER XV.

Baboons and Monkeys. — Mode of hunting the Baboon. — Habits of the Ant-Bear — Method of capturing the Animal.—Singular Instinct of the Honey-Bird.—Anecdote of the Fiscal.—Variety of Snakes.—The Puff-Adder. — The Ring-Hals, or Ring-Neck.—Remarks on Snake-Bites.—Adventure of the Author.—The Secretary Bird.—Remedy for the Bite of a Serpent.—Meaning of the term "Fascination."—The Snake and the Birds.—The Chameleon.—Scorpions.—The Tarantula.—Pheasants and Partridges. —The Paaw, or Wild Peacock.

Baboons and monkeys, which, after man, may be said to constitute the next link in the chain of existence, are found in great numbers in the mountains of Swellendam. The former, in particular, are very destructive to the gardens of the colonists who reside near their haunts. I have seen one of them deliberately help himself to a melon or pumpkin in the daytime, and walk off with it under his arm. But it is in

the night that they commit the greatest depredations in the gardens.

Baboons are often taken when young, and taught a variety of tricks. I remember a farmer near the frontier making a tame one exhibit his acquirements for my amusement: he made him perform several manœuvres with a stick, which he had taught him to handle as a soldier does his firelock.

The mode of catching the young baboons is curious. They are hunted by dogs, with which the larger ones often fight desperately; but they generally make off, leaving their young at the mercy of their enemies. To escape their more dangerous assailants, the young baboons often instinctively fly for protection to the hunters, and, leaping upon the backs of their horses, cling to them with their arms: they are then easily secured, and soon become attached to their masters. I have often been told by the colonists, that the baboons, when they are attacked by a leopard, frequently turn upon their enemy and tear him to pieces. I have never had an opportunity of ascertaining the truth of this story, nor can I easily believe it; though

there can be no doubt that the baboons possess extraordinary muscular strength, and are often an overmatch for the dogs when they are attacked.

I have already alluded to that very singular animal the ant-bear, with whose habits Europeans are already in some degree acquainted. The Cape colony almost everywhere abounds with ant-hills, which are always constructed of clay. Many of these are found to be perforated with holes made by the ant-bear, into which he thrusts his long sharp nose in search of his peculiar food.

I have only seen one species of this animal at the Cape, which is about five feet in length. It is possessed of extraordinary muscular power in the legs, to enable it to penetrate the indurated clay of a dry climate, in making its hole. I have frequently been engaged with some of our neighbours in digging them out, which was attended with very great labour. These holes often extend to the distance of twenty or thirty feet under ground.

The only way to get hold of the ant-bear is to sink a hole as near the termination of its

retreat as possible; for the moment he knows that he is in danger, he buries himself still deeper in the ground, stopping up the hole behind him with the earth he throws up with his powerful claws.

As soon as we could reach him, we tied a strong leathern thong to his hind leg and attempted to drag him out. In most cases, the animal was so strong that four or five of us were unable to move him with all our efforts. I have even seen them break a thong which was strong enough to hold a wild ox by the hind leg. When we could not get them out in this way, we had to shoot them in the hole.

My readers are already acquainted with the honey-bird, or *cuculus indicator*, from Mr. Sparrman's description. His accuracy has been questioned by Bruce, who gives a drawing of a bird that is indeed well known at the Cape; not the bee-cuckoo mentioned by Sparrman, but a bird called the fiscal, which I shall presently notice.

The habits of the honey-bird are by no means incorrectly described by the first-mentioned traveller, for I have often found honey in the

woods with their assistance. While I resided in Swellendam, I frequently went on honey-hunting expeditions, accompanied by one of our Hottentots, who carried a tinder-box to make a fire to smoke the bees out, and a leathern bag to hold the sweets.

This bird is easily distinguished by its impatient and importunate note. As soon as it sees any one, it flies round him to attract his attention with its peculiar chirp, and then flies off a short distance in the direction of the honey. But if the person turns back or takes a different course, the bird will follow and endeavour to induce him to continue his pursuit.

As soon as the honey-bird reaches the hive, he perches on some adjoining tree and remains silent: and even then the hunter has often great difficulty in finding the tree which contains the hive. The Hottentots, however, find the greater part of the honey by watching the flight of the bees, as the honey-birds are not very numerous in any part of the colony.

There is something exceedingly interesting in this sport. We are delighted with the singular instinct of our little coadjutor, and are

led through a hundred wild romantic scenes during the pursuit which we should never discover without his aid. We are reminded of the delightful tale of Sadak searching for the waters of oblivion guided by the little golden bird :—and who knows but the honey-bird, or some other like it, may have suggested the fable? There are few men who at times would not gladly drown their cares and sorrows in some such frivolous amusement as this; and happy are they who can forget them in the contemplation of the endless works of Nature, and can look on her calm heart-breathing beauties without a sting of self-reproach!

The fiscal is so named after a magistrate at Cape Town who formerly possessed great power under the Dutch Government. This little bird, which, as I have already stated, Bruce has mistaken for the bee-cuckoo, or honey-bird as it is called in the colony, has a curious custom of hanging up on a thorn any little snakes, lizards, or worms, it has destroyed. I had often observed these creatures suspended on the thorn-bushes, and was informed by the Dutch and Hottentots that the fiscal was in the habit of

executing this summary justice on the reptiles that he preyed upon.

There is a great variety of snakes in the district of Swellendam; but though few of the different species are poisonous, yet the dangerous kinds appear to be the more numerous. The puff-adder, the ring-hals, and the berg-adder, are very poisonous and very numerous. The first-mentioned derives its name from its puffing up or swelling out its neck when it is enraged. Its fangs are very much hooked; and the Dutch and Hottentots say that it leaps from the ground and throws itself over backwards when it attacks a person. I have, however, never seen an instance of this or any other snake leaping from the ground, during my long residence in the colony, and I cannot help doubting the truth of the story.

When a snake meditates an attack, he generally coils himself up, in which position he can easily dart his body forward to its full length without the tail quitting the ground. This cannot be called leaping, though it may often have that appearance to inaccurate observers. If we notice the conformation of those animals

which are capable of leaping farthest, we always find that they possess great rigidity of muscle joined to great elasticity, and but moderate flexibility; for great flexibility, in the human body at least, is generally accompanied by a degree of weakness. Snakes are evidently deficient in rigidity of muscle, and they possess flexibility in the highest degree. For these reasons I cannot, until I see it, believe that snakes can leap entirely from the ground either forward or backward. The puff-adder is generally found in the plains among rank herbage, and in gardens and hedges.

The ring-hals, or ring-neck, obtains its name from having a belt of white or yellow round the neck. It is more dangerous than the puff-adder, being less afraid of man. They are found in the same situations, have similar habits, but are less numerous than the first-mentioned. The berg-adders are found commonly on or near mountains; they are generally smaller and are less dangerous than those already mentioned.

All strangers in countries where these reptiles abound are apt to exaggerate their danger;

but in a year or two they think as little of them as we do of a lizard in England. I never knew an instance of a snake attacking or biting a person unless it was trodden on or molested; and even then they almost always give warning by hissing, or endeavour to effect their escape. During my residence in the colony, I have at different times trodden on them or kicked them in the grass unintentionally, but was never bitten.

On one occasion, shortly after my arrival in the country, I was much alarmed by a snake from which I saw no possibility of getting away. I had contrived a shower-bath between two walls, where there had formerly been a water-wheel to turn a mill. One day I had stripped to enjoy my daily luxury, and was going to pull the string, when a long green snake, which might have measured about a yard and a half, tumbled out of the thatch of the house and fell round my neck. I threw the loathsome reptile off as quickly as possible, and retreated as far back as the wall would allow me.

The snake, not half relishing the unceremo-

nious manner in which I had repelled his over-familiarity, reared himself up on his tail and continued regarding me for some moments with a most malevolent aspect. I could not escape, as my enemy guarded the only exit from the place, and I had no weapon to defend myself. He soon, however, to my great relief, retreated into a hole in the wall of the mill, where I killed him, to revenge the bodily fear into which he had thrown me, and to put an end to such disagreeable intrusions for the future.

It is remarkable that all snakes, whether poisonous or otherwise, seem perfectly aware of the fear and detestation which their appearance inspires in all animals, and never fail to brandish their forked tongue when disabled from making their escape. Fortunately they have numerous enemies to prevent them from becoming too numerous.

The secretary-birds, in particular, kill great numbers of them. This bird, which is held sacred in the colony, is often to be seen, especially in the eastern district, stalking with a formal ceremonious pace through the fields in

search of the snakes. As soon as he finds one, he strikes him with his long scaly legs, on which it is probable the poison could take no effect, and either kills him on the spot, or flies aloft with him in his claws, whirling him about to prevent his biting, and then drops him to the ground from a great height, after which he swallows him whole without more ado.

I have seen a young secretary-bird swallow a puff-adder whole, which was at least three feet in length, and thicker than a man's wrist. The secretary generally makes its nest on the top of a mimosa or other tree; and they hatch only two eggs at a time.

The animal called the ratel, which I shall have occasion to describe in the sequel, is also known to prey on snakes: this creature is now very rare in the district of Swellendam. Crows also devour small snakes; and I should suppose many other birds might be enumerated among their enemies, were we sufficiently acquainted with their habits. In hunting, I have often seen my dogs spring simultaneously on a snake, and tear him to pieces in an instant, without allowing him time to bite, and carefully avoid-

ing his head; for all animals seem perfectly aware of their danger from his fangs.

There are various methods adopted in the colony to prevent the dangerous consequences of the bite of a venomous serpent. The common way is, to tie a handkerchief tightly above the wound round the limb of the person, who is then recommended to make the best of his way to a spring of running water, where he must immerse his limb, and, cutting deeply into the flesh round the wound, allow it to bleed freely for some time. I very much doubt, however, whether this mode would be effectual when the person is bitten by a very dangerous snake.

Anything which promotes the circulation of the blood has a tendency to counteract the effects of the virus. With this intention, medical men generally prescribe frequent doses of some preparation of ammonia, which generally answers the purpose from its stimulating effects. The Hottentots also often suck out the poison with the mouth, or by means of a horn made for the purpose.

It has often been asserted, and as often

denied, that snakes have the power of fascinating animals for the purpose of destroying them. It seems to me that both parties in this question, as in many others, do not seem to have had a very clear idea of the subject in dispute. The term "fascination" is so equivocal in its meaning, that unless its signification be clearly defined, any argument founded on it must be merely an assumption. If fascination is meant to imply the power by which an animal is irresistibly drawn into danger in spite of itself, I must profess my total disbelief in the existence of such a power in the snake or in any other animal.

But there is another kind of what may be termed or mistaken for fascination, which I have often observed in a variety of creatures. Now, supposing some one of my readers, as has several times happened to myself, should, during a walk along a forest-path, absorbed in a reverie, suddenly meet a wild elephant or some other dangerous animal face to face, the chances are ten to one that both would be very much astonished at the unexpected meeting, and gaze somewhat sillily at each other for a few mo-

ments before either of them would attack or retreat.

I readily grant that should either of the parties turn tail, this kind of fascination would immediately lose its effect, and that the more frightened of the two would endeavour to effect his escape with all convenient speed. I believe this to be the whole amount of what is called fascination in serpents.

I shall now relate a little incident which may be applied either way, according to the judgment or fancy of the reader, but which in my own opinion will by no means tend to establish the existence of the power of fascination.

One day, while walking along the little stream before our house at Groot Vaders Bosch, my attention was attracted by the chirping of two or three little birds, that were fluttering over a peach-tree, which had grown up from a stone having been accidentally dropped among the bushes on the margin. On observing the spot more minutely, I saw a snake twisted spirally round the stem of the tree. The story of fascination immediately occurred to me, and I lost no time in concealing myself among the

wild geraniums to see the result. The snake had its eyes intently fixed on the birds, which continued to flutter round him—now approaching within a foot or two, and then mounting aloft in the air. This went on for several minutes, without the birds approaching nearer, or the snake making any apparent effort to catch them. At last the birds flew off, and their enemy slowly descended from the tree.

I often, during my walks, met with that singular animal the chameleon. The other species of lizards are very numerous, and often beautiful in their colours: none of them, however, as far as I could learn, is believed to be poisonous.

The scorpion is also frequently to be seen. As soon as it perceives your approach, it holds out its open claws, and hisses, erecting the tail at the same time. I have never found scorpions above three inches in length. They are not considered at all dangerous. I have known several people who have been bitten by them; but they told me that the only inconvenience they had suffered, was a slight inflammation for an inch or two round the part, and not worse than the effects of a sting from a bee.

Among the venomous creatures of South Africa, I may perhaps mention the tarantula, which is found in all parts of the Cape settlement, and in the district of Swellendam in particular. No instance of this spider being poisonous has ever fallen under my own observation; and I have great doubts if such be the case, so far as mankind and this colony are concerned.

In speaking of the birds peculiar to this part of the globe, I should not have forgotten the pheasants and partridges. The former in flavour resemble the common fowl, but in plumage they bear no comparison to the English pheasant. They are not easily shot, from the closeness of the bushes in which they harbour; but great numbers are daily taken by setting traps and snares for them in their haunts. We sometimes, in the course of a night, caught four or five brace of them in this manner. The partridges are inferior to the English ones in flavour.

The finest bird of the colony, but which has become very scarce in the older districts, is the paaw, or wild peacock, as it is called by the

Dutch: it is, I believe, a species of bustard. These birds are generally found in pairs, and sometimes are larger than the common turkey. This is the only bird which the Dutch colonists shoot; the smaller ones not being considered worth the powder and shot expended on them.

In enumerating the different animals of the district of Swellendam, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to confine myself to such particulars as are not generally known in this country, and have therefore refrained from minute descriptions of their external appearance, which have been often given by others better qualified for the task.

CHAPTER XVI.

Farming Establishment at Groot Vaders Bosch.—Hottentot and European Servants—Their Wages—Their usual Occupations.—Laziness of the Hottentots.—Low Price of Wheat.—Residence of the Author's Brother.—Subscription of the Farmers.—Difficulty of disposing of Grain.—Failure of the Wheat-crops.—English and Dutch Farming.—An Eccentric Character.—Craving of the Hottentots for Brandy.—Singular Anecdote.—Customs of the Hottentots.—Comforts of Savage Races.—Journey to George Town.—Travelling in Waggons delightful.—A Romantic Country.—Irrigation of the Land.—Hottentot Powers of Imitation.—Singular Youth.

I NOW return to our agricultural proceedings at Groot Vaders Bosch. My brother, who was much more devoted to his books and speculations than to the practical and daily business of a farm, which in South Africa, above all, cannot be managed without constant personal superintendence, gladly handed over this part of the concern to me; and in consideration of my

trouble, I was to share in the profits of the farm. I was glad of the opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of agriculture in the colony before I should commence operations on my own account.

Our farming establishment consisted of three or four Scotch labourers and five or six Hottentots with their families. Hottentots are quite indispensable on a farm in this colony for managing the working oxen and milch cows, as Europeans who have not arrived in the country at an early age cannot easily acquire the necessary dexterity in these matters.

Two of our European servants were good ploughmen; but they could not yoke in or manage the half-wild oxen without the assistance of the Hottentots. Though the latter receive but little wages, they are by no means such cheap servants as might be imagined, when we consider that their wives and families must be supported by the farmer, though he receives very little work from them in return.

The common wages of a Hottentot in this part of the colony are from three to five rix dollars (4*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* 6*d.*) per month. This appears

a very small sum; but when we calculate the expense of maintaining their families, and the very limited demand for produce, and also the great distance of the markets in a country without inland navigation, I am persuaded that it is the full value of their services. It is true that the Hottentots are often grossly cheated by the roguish farmers; but the competition for labourers and the difficulty of procuring them are now so great among the colonists, that we cannot suppose that they receive much less generally than the true value of their labour.

The Hottentot men milk the cows, and perform all the work connected with the cattle: all that their wives do is to churn the milk and wash the butter. If the females are employed in the house of the farmer, they always receive wages or clothing; but in general they will not consent to do any kind of work for any one but their husbands.

No people are more capable of enduring continued and severe labour than the Hottentots; but they are always intolerably lazy. I cannot easily convey an idea of the annoyance they continually occasioned me. I could not turn

my back for ever so short a time but they immediately left off work, whatever they might be employed upon. Sometimes, when we were getting our wheat trodden out, I had occasion to leave them for half an hour; but, when I returned, I generally found several of them sound asleep among the straw, and the others deliberately smoking their pipes. I soon saw that they were quite incorrigible in this respect, and that it was only by keeping constantly with them that I could expect to get anything done.

The work that a Hottentot delights in is driving a waggon: here, wielding his long whip right and left among ten or a dozen oxen, he is quite in his element. The worst of him is, that in the enjoyment of his favourite employment he does not care one farthing for his master's interest, and cruelly abuses his cattle on all occasions, if he is allowed.

The price of wheat was exceedingly low the first year of my residence in the district of Swellendam. It was, indeed, hardly possible to dispose of it in any quantity; and the little that was sold fetched only from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*

per bushel. The crop had been abundant, and though, as I have already mentioned, the farmers grew but little more than they required for their own consumption, yet the population being almost all producers, there was necessarily but little demand for the surplus at so great a distance from Cape Town, which is the only market for the produce of the western districts.

My brother had fixed on his present residence in the hope that the mouth of the Breede river, which was known to be accessible to small vessels, and only forty miles distant, would become frequented by the colonial coasters. However, some time was required to effect these arrangements, as there were then no stores at the Breede river for the reception of goods; and, besides, it was not an easy matter to induce any of the Cape Town merchants to risk their property in entering a port with which they were so little acquainted.

Three or four years afterwards, my brother succeeded in raising a subscription among the neighbouring farmers, which enabled them to build a large store at the mouth of the river,

which is now called Port-Beaufort; and at last some of the merchants were induced to send their vessels to receive the wheat and other produce of the farmers in exchange for manufactured goods, &c.

The effect of establishing this outlet for the produce of the district was almost immediately felt in the increased industry of the agriculturists, who now grow three times the quantity of grain they did formerly. This shows the absurdity of taxing the Dutch farmers with indolence, when the principle of self-interest, or avarice, of which they possess so large a share, had no scope for being brought into action.

At the period however of which I am now speaking, not being able to dispose of his grain at a fair price, my brother kept a large quantity stacked on the ground, which he sold the following year on the spot at the rate of *7s. 6d.* per bushel, being treble the price of wheat in the preceding year.

The year 1820, to which I allude, was the commencement of a succession of bad crops, or rather a nearly total failure of the wheat in most parts of the colony, in consequence of a

disease called "the rust," which had not been known in the country for forty years before. As may be supposed, our wheat-crops, under these circumstances, proved by no means a profitable speculation.

For the reasons I have formerly stated, a farmer in this colony, who is not situated within a moderate distance of a market, would do well to confine his attention to the rearing of live stock, which can be brought to market at a much smaller expense and require less labour in their management.

My brother's vineyard and orchard did not prove more profitable to him than his wheat-crops, beyond the luxuries they afforded for his table. There was no sale for fruit in the neighbourhood, where it was exceedingly abundant, and the inferior wine produced from the vineyard paid little more than the expense of cultivation. The Dutch farmers, however, turn these articles to some account by carrying them in their waggons several hundred miles to the frontier districts, where they exchange them for cattle and sheep.

The possession of slaves, together with the

labour of their own families, enable the Dutch to cultivate their ground at a much smaller expense than the English farmers, who are generally of a higher class in society, and cannot bring themselves to relish these long journeys from home, and the drudgery of retailing their produce about the country.

One of the people who had come out to the colony with my brother, and who was a gardener by trade, had taken his orchard at a moderate rent in hopes of turning it to some account. This man was quite an original in his way, and possessed a large share of all the peculiarities of his countrymen, joined to a great deal of eccentricity acquired from his solitary mode of life.

He was, besides, a man of decided talent, and, like many of his profession in Scotland, had contrived to pick up a great deal of general information from a variety of sources which it would have puzzled himself to particularize.

In his habits, he was a perfect hermit: he allowed his beard to grow and frizzle luxuriantly round his chin, and his tall straight person was covered with clothes of his own making.

As he was not the best of tailors, he adopted the most summary mode of fashioning his garments according to his own vague idea of the shape of his person. He had not entirely failed in fabricating his leather trousers after the cut of an old pair he had brought out with him: but the jacket was his masterpiece; for, just as much from whim as want of skill, he contrived to cover his body by cutting a hole in the middle of a piece of cloth for his head to go through, allowing the two ends to fall down before and behind below the middle of his body, where it was secured by a leather belt.

He had taken up his residence in an old mill in the orchard, which was some hundred yards from any other habitation and buried among the trees, with the double view of being near his work and removed from the society of the other people, for whom John Weir entertained a great aversion.

His domicile was fitted up in a true Robinson Crusoe fashion. His bed was formed of rough sticks covered with rushes instead of a mattress, and slung by the four corners from the roof of the room; and he had constructed a

rude sofa and table of similar materials. Here John resided, apparently happy and contented with his situation.

But there were times when his social propensities would get the better of his habitual misanthropy; and, on some occasions, when the other people were indulging themselves with an extra glass of brandy and a Scotch reel with the Hottentot girls, John, charmed with the sounds of the fiddle, would quit his retreat in the orchard, and rushing into the midst of the revellers like a creature dropped from another world, calling out at the same time to make room for him, would seize one of the *fair* dames by the hands, and, whirling her into the middle of the room, cut the most extravagant capers, making his legs fly about in all directions, to the manifest danger of the bystanders. After indulging his most extravagant freaks for a few hours, and appearing the merriest of the party — shouting, yelling, and singing — this singular mortal would retire quietly to his den, where he would immure himself for whole weeks on a stretch, seeking no one's company, and asking no one's assistance in anything.

John was a devourer of books, and I used often to take him some to read, and hear his acute and extraordinary remarks on their contents. Astronomy was one of his favourite studies, and every piece of wood about his habitation was covered with the calculations he had made to satisfy his mind on various points connected with that science.

Like a true philosopher, he would not allow himself to be led away by the opinions of any author he read, unless his mind was perfectly satisfied of the justness of his reasoning. My brother and myself were the only individuals in the place with whom this extraordinary being would condescend to enter into any long conversation; which he did in the most familiar terms, conceiving himself quite on an equality in point of intellect, but without the smallest disposition to forwardness or insolence in his manner.

John had ample leisure to digest what he had been reading over-night, while engaged during the day in cutting and drying peaches and other fruits in the sun: he had thus sufficient employment for mind and body at the same time.

The only thing that seemed at all to disturb his tranquillity was when some Hottentot girl ventured to approach his domicile. On such an occasion, he might be seen running after her at full speed, in the vain hope of overtaking her and of preferring his suit. The dames, on their part, though by no means insensible to tender emotions on ordinary occasions, had a decided aversion to the appearance of this singular character, and, as they fled, loaded their pursuer with opprobrious epithets, comparing him to a wild boar or a porcupine,—to the aptness of which similitude his bristly chin bore ample testimony.

I have already alluded to the craving the Hottentots have for brandy. We were constantly annoyed with their importunities for "soupies" or drams of their favourite liquor. Sometimes they begged a "soupie" on the score of the weather being cold; at others, they were troubled with the cholic or a headache; —all complaints, in fact, were to be cured by brandy.

The most ingenious and original device, however, was practised on one occasion by the wife

of one of our Hottentot farm-servants, who came occasionally to churn at the house. After trying entreaties without any effect, she went out during a heavy shower of rain until her clothes were thoroughly soaked; and then, very deliberately stripping herself of every article she wore, walked into the room where we were sitting, carrying her dripping garments in her hand, and boldly demanded of my brother "if it was handsome in him to refuse her a glass of brandy, when she had got all her clothes thus wet in his service?" He was of course glad to get rid of so extraordinary an apparition on her own terms

The Hottentot house-servants in this country are never furnished with beds, as they are accustomed to sleep on the ground wrapped up in a sheepskin blanket. We had two girls in the house who slept on a cane-bottomed sofa in the hall, without any covering but their usual clothing; for neither the Dutch nor the Hottentots ever divest themselves of anything but their outer garment when they go to bed.

As soon as their work was over, when it was moonlight, these damsels, who were sisters, went

out of doors, where they were soon joined by several girls from the outhouses, and they would dance and sing for half the night without intermission: there seemed to be no possibility of exhausting their extravagant animal spirits. Thus they pass their youth in thoughtless mirth; and, when they are somewhat sobered by years, they take equal pleasure in chattering round their fire through the greater part of the night, in telling their adventures, and in describing the character and mimicking the manners of the different masters they had lived with.

People in this state of society may be said to be children all their lives; and, could we weigh their happiness in a balance with that of their masters, I believe we should find that, in spite of their many discomforts and privations, they enjoy fully as great a share of it as the more civilized race. Fortunately for the lower and oppressed classes in all communities, Providence has not left their happiness entirely dependant on the will of their masters, but wisely provided many compensating circumstances in their favour, over which power and wealth can exercise no control.

Their levity and freedom from care constitute a large portion of the comforts of the Hottentots: they live but for the present moment. When they have plenty of food, they share it with their friends, and enjoy themselves: when they have little, it gives them no uneasiness, custom having made them able to endure opposite extremes with little inconvenience. They can go to sleep at will, and their rest is never disturbed by anxiety for the morrow. Such a life, which would be insupportable to men who have acquired civilized habits, is not only tolerable but agreeable to savages, whose enjoyments are not to be measured by our own.

My brother had for some time been proposing to visit the district-town of George, which is situated about one hundred and twenty miles from Groot Vaders Bosch. Several of the people whom he had brought to the colony were employed in felling and sawing timber in the extensive forests of that district, which supplied the principal part of the timber used at Cape Town. Most of these men still owed him a great part of the money they were bound by their contract to pay him for the expenses of

conveying them to the colony, and his presence on the spot was requisite to enforce the payment of their debt.

To make the best of his time, my brother determined on travelling with his waggon drawn by twelve of his strongest oxen, with the view of bringing back a load of yellow wood planks, which are generally used for house-building throughout the colony, this kind of timber not being found in the forests of Swellendam.

It was late in the day we had fixed for starting before we had all things necessary for our journey stowed away; so that we only got about ten or twelve miles from home before the sun went down. In a country where there are no inns for the reception of travellers, a journey in a waggon is like a voyage by sea; we must lay in ample stores of such things as cannot be purchased along the road, besides as much furniture as may be absolutely requisite for comfort. We therefore took a mattress and bedding, which served us both to sleep on; and filled the waggon-chest, on which the driver sits, with stores of bread, flour, tea and sugar, &c. &c.

To people not over-particular about their comforts, in a climate such as this a waggon covered from the heat of the sun by a tent is by no means an unpleasant mode of conveyance; and it possesses this advantage, that it enables the passenger to be quite independent of the company or hospitality of the farmers along the road, when he prefers it:—for me, a jaunt in a waggon was always delightful in the extreme. As a matter of course, we took our guns with us to get a shot at any antelopes or other game we might see near the road.

In the first few miles of our journey, there was nothing remarkable in the appearance of the country, excepting the romantic character it derived from the magnificent chain of mountains on our left. As we quitted the valleys in their immediate neighbourhood, however, the soil, though rich and productive in its nature, became more arid. When we came to the Duivenhoeks river, which is a rapid and constant stream, the country assumed a new character.

The soil, which was a clay, was of an exceedingly bright red colour, but very dry. Yet,

notwithstanding the aridity of the ground and the scantiness of the grass, it was almost everywhere covered with low bushes, on which the cattle and sheep were browsing; and they were the fattest cattle I had yet seen in the colony.

This kind of red clay soil is generally called "karoo" by the Dutch, and is always exceedingly productive in wheat, and yields the finest fruit of any in the colony when it is occasionally irrigated by a stream of water to correct its extreme aridity.

The command of a constant stream to moisten his ground gives the farmer a great advantage in a country of this description, as he can by its aid sow his grain when he likes, and is quite independent of rain, which is so necessary in other situations; and it is observed that the wheat grown in this manner is the whitest and finest in the colony.

We rested for the night at the Duivenhoeks river, where our Hottentots soon made a fire and prepared our repast. On these occasions, they generally make a separate fire for themselves at a few paces distant, round which they

sit talking for half the night, laughing at and mocking the oddities of all the masters whom they have formerly served: we of course were spared, *at present at least*, as we could hear every word they said. The Hottentots have great powers of imitation; and, to increase the effect of their drollery, they sometimes divide the characters they represent among them, each taking his particular part of the dialogue, as in a play.

We were some hours in bed in the waggon before our attendants had exhausted their stock of gossip and jokes, when, rolling themselves up in their sheepskin-blankets, they laid themselves down contentedly on the ground round the fire with their pipes in their mouths, and continued smoking till they fell asleep.

One of these thoughtless mortals was a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age, who had been a long time in my brother's service. He was a half-breed between a Mozambique slave and a Hottentot woman, and was the lowest, in point of intellect, of any human creature I have ever met with who was not born an idiot.

If there is any truth in phrenology, the shape of

his head sufficiently indicated his character. His forehead was narrow and contracted, and there was a remarkable preponderance of the animal organs. His head was besides exceedingly small, and fixed on his neck in the same manner as a monkey's. My brother constantly supplied him with clothes, which he took in lieu of wages; but, as soon as they got dirty, he threw them away, and came to his master for more. He had thus incurred a debt which five or six years' service would hardly have sufficed to discharge. He possessed cunning, but it partook much more of instinct than of reason. He had all the thoughtless improvidence of his mother's race, joined to the innate stupidity of his father's.

Yet this creature could manage a waggon tolerably well; and he was, moreover, an excellent horseman—in so far, at least, as courage and a sure seat entitled him to that somewhat dignified appellation. His mode of acquiring this accomplishment deserves notice. So great was his passion for riding, that he used to get up in the night-time, and, taking a whip and a leather thong for a bridle in his hand, would steal

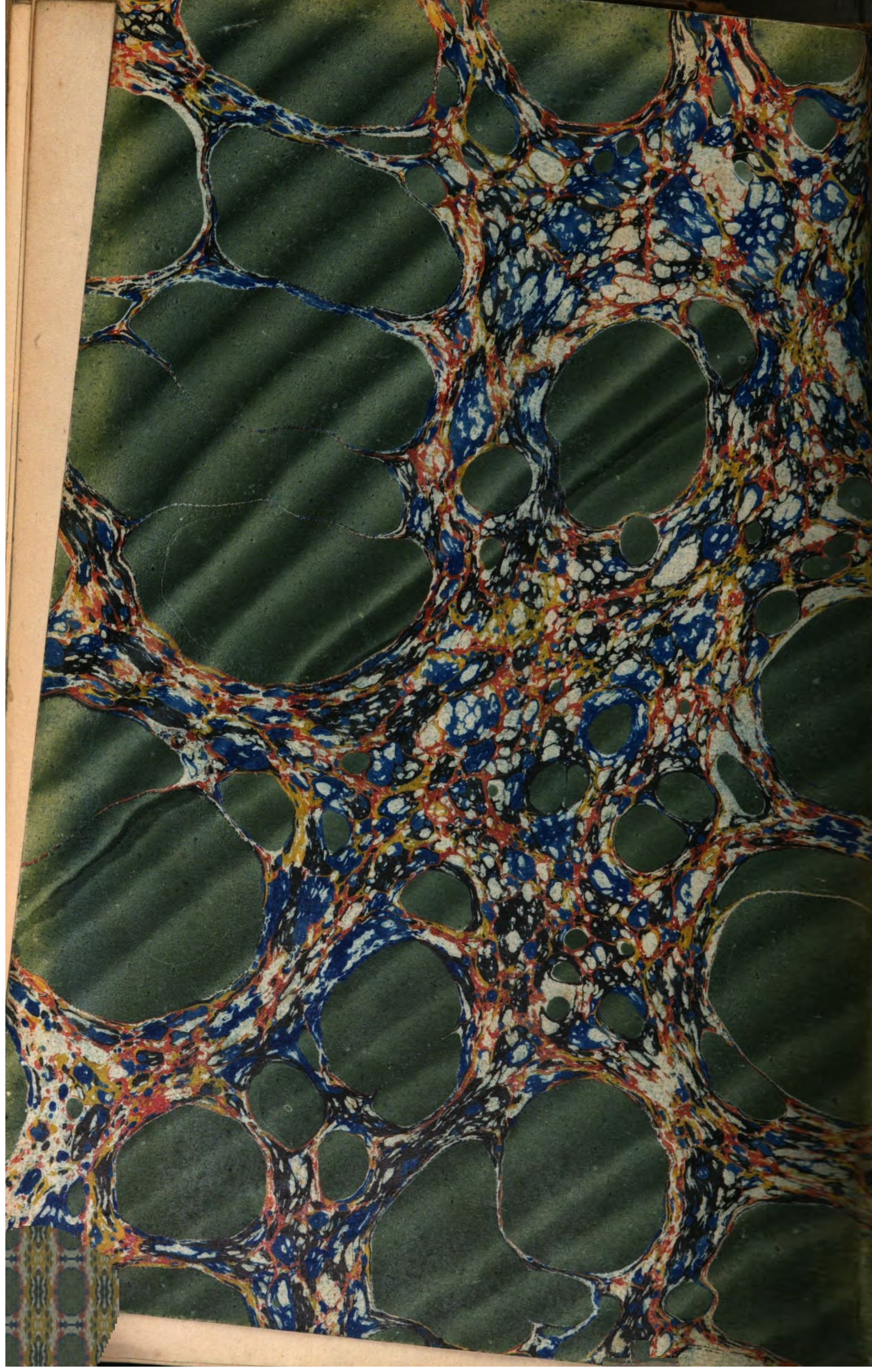
quietly to the pen where the calves were kept, and, mounting one of the largest of them, would flog him till he carried him wherever he liked.

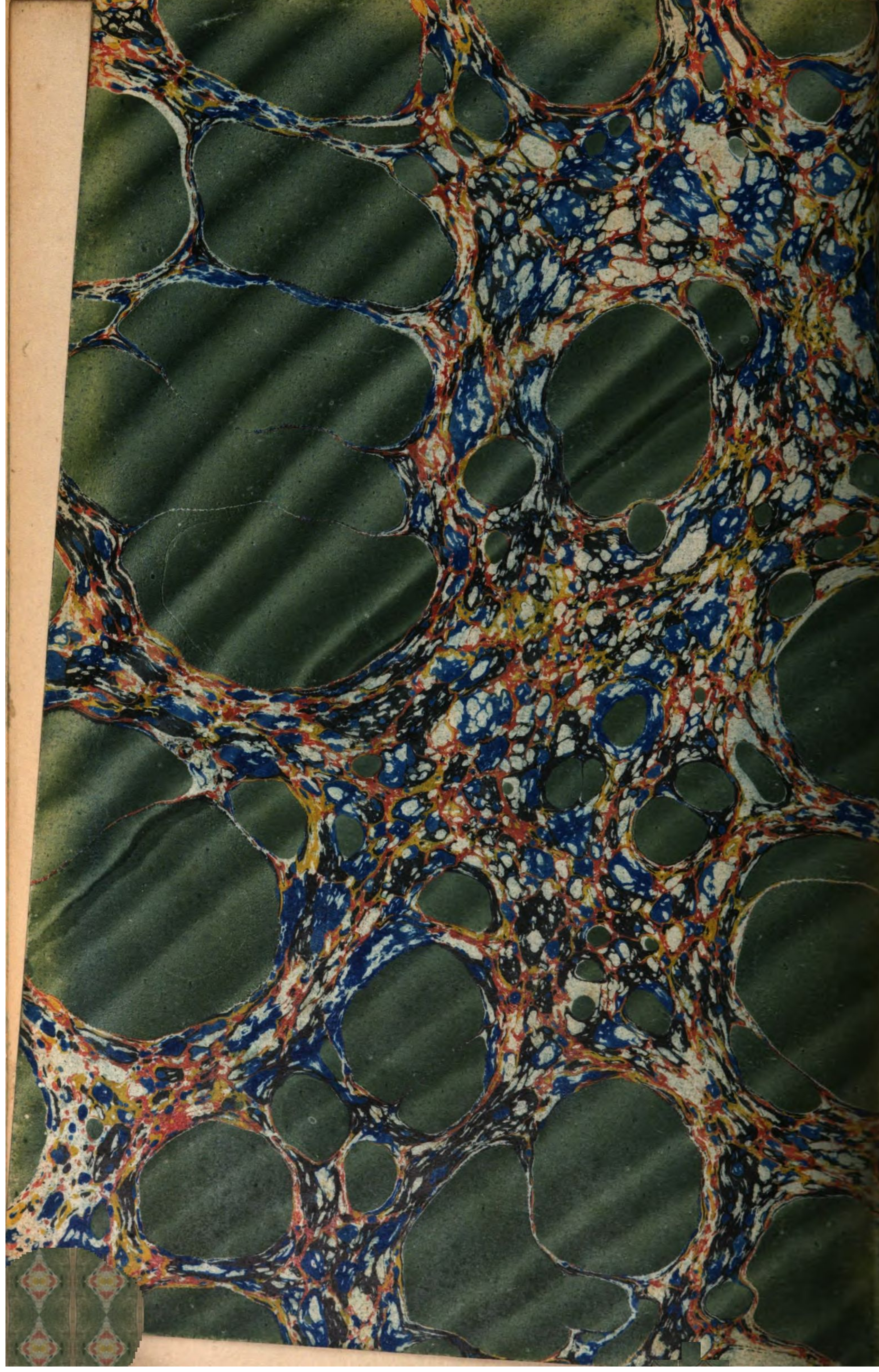
When one of the calves was exhausted with this exercise, he would take another and serve him in the same way. He had played this prank so often with our horses, that we were obliged to lock them up at night; but it was a long time before we discovered this new resource of his, by the emaciated appearance of the calves.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

LONDON :
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.





BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek

MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Moodie, John Wedderburn Dunbar,

Ten years in South Africa incliding a particular description of the wild sports of that country ; in two volumes

Bd.: 1

London (1835)

lt.sing. 688 t-1
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10467571-0